IN THE NAME OF ALLAH;

THE ALL-BENEFICENT, THE ALL-MERCIFUL

قَالَ تَعَالَىٰ:

﴿إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنكُمُ ٱلرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ ٱلْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا﴾

Indeed, Allah desires to repel all impurity from you, o people of the household, and purify you with a thorough purification.

(Sūrah al-Aḥzāb 33:33)

The most authoritative books on Ḥadīth and Tafsīr (Qur'ānic exegesis), amongst both Sunnī and Shīʿah sources, cite Prophetic traditions that confirm verse 33:33 as being exclusively revealed in relation to the five who were 'covered by the Cloak'; namely Muḥammad, ʿAlī, Fāṭimah, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn, (peace be upon them), to whom the term 'Ahl al-Bayt' (People of the House) is specifically attributed.

For instance, refer to the following reference books:

(1) Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241 AH), *al-Musnad*, 1:331; 4:107; 6:292, 304. (2) *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (d. 261 AH), 7:130. (3) Al-Tirmidhī (d. 279 AH), *Sunan*, 5:361 et al. (4) Al-Dūlābī (d. 310 AH), *al-Dhurriyyah al-Ṭāhirah al-Nabawiyyah*, p. 108. (5) Al-Nassa'ī (d. 303 AH), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā* 5:108, 113. (6) al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī (d. 405 AH), *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 2:416, 3:133, 146, 147. (7) al-Zarkashī (d. 794 AH), *al-Burhān*, pp. 197. (8) Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 852), *Fatḥ al-Barī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 7:104. (9) Al-Kulaynī (d. 328 AH), *Uṣūl al-Kāfī*, 1:287. (10) Ibn Bābawayh (d. 329 AH), *al-Imāmah wa'l-Tabṣirah*, pp. 47, H. 29. (11) Al-Maghribī (d. 363 AH) *Daʿā'im al-Islām*, pp. 35, 37. (12) Al-Ṣadūq (d. 381 AH) *al-Khiṣāl*, pp. 403, 550. (13) Al-Ṭūsī (d. 460 AH) *al-Amālī*, H. 438, 482, 783.

For more details, refer to the exegesis of the holy verse involved in the following reference books of *tafsīr*: (1) Al-Ṭabarī (d. 310 AH), *Book of Tafsīr*. (2) Al-Jaṣṣāṣ (d. 370 AH), *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*. (3) Al-Wāḥidī (d. 468 AH), *Asbāb an-Nuzūl*. (4) Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597 AH), *Zād al-Masīr*. (5) Al-Qurṭubī (d. 671 AH), *al-Jāmīʿ li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*. (6) Ibn Kathīr (d. 774 AH), *Book of Tafsīr*. (7) Al-Thaʿlabī (d. 825 AH), *Book of Tafsīr*. (8) Al-Suyūṭī (d. 911 AH), *al-Durr al-Manthūr*. (9) Al-Shawkānī (d. 1250 AH), *Fatḥ al-Qadīr*. (10) Al-ʿAyyāshī (d. 320 AH), *Book of Tafsīr*. (11) Al-Qummī (d. 329 AH), *Book of Tafsīr*. (12) Furāṭ al-Kūfī (d. 352 AH), *Book of Tafsīr*; in the margin of the exegesis of verse 4:59. (13) Al-Ṭabrisī (d. 560 AH), *Majmaʿ al-Bayān*.

THE SAQĪFAH CONSPIRACY

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ:

إِنِّي تَارِكٌ فِيكُمُ الثَّقَلَيْنِ: كِتَابَ اللهِ وَعِتْرَتِي أَهْلَ بَيْتِي، مَا إِنْ تَمَسَّكْتُمْ بِهِمَا لَنْ تَضِلُّوا بَعْدِي أَبَداً، وَإِنَّهُمَا لَنْ يَفْتَرِقَا حَتَّى يَرِدَا عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضَ.

The Messenger of Allah (ṣ) said:

"Verily, I am leaving among you two precious things [*thaqalayn*]: The Book of Allah and my progeny [*ʿitrah*], the members of my Household [*Ahl al-Bayt*]. If you hold fast to them, you shall never go astray. These two will never separate from each other until they meet me at the Pond [*ḥawḍ*] (of *Kawthar*)."

Some of its references:

Al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ʿalā'l-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut), vol. 3, pp. 109-110, 148, 533

Muslim, *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, (English translation), book 31, ḥadīths 5920-3

Al-Tirmidhī, *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 5, pp. 621-2, ḥadīths 3786, 3788; vol. 2, p. 219

An-Nassā'ī, *Khaṣā'iṣ* ʿAlī *ibn Abī Ṭālib*, ḥadīth 79

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, vol. 3, pp. 14, 17, 26; vol. 3, pp. 26, 59; vol. 4, p. 371; vol. 5, pp. 181-182, 189-190

Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmiʿ al-Uṣūl*, vol. 1, p. 277

Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, vol. 5, p. 209

Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-ʿAẓīm*, vol. 6, p. 199

Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Silsilāt al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah* (Kuwait: Ad-Dār as-Salafiyyah), vol. 4, pp. 355-358.

THE SAQĪFAH CONSPIRACY

An Analytic Study of the Most Critical Event in the Political History of Islam

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Translated By
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Ahl al-Bayt ('a) World Assembly

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PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

The precious legacy left behind by the Holy Prophet's Household [*ahl al-bayt*] (may peace be upon them all) and their followers' preservation of this legacy from the menace of extinction is a perfect example of an all-encompassing school [*maktab*], which embraces the different branches of Islamic knowledge. This school has been able to train many talented personalities by quenching them with this gushing fountain. This school has presented scholars to the *ummah* who, by following the Holy Prophet's Household (ʿa), have occupied the station of clarifying doubts and skepticisms brought forth by various creeds and intellectual currents both inside and outside Muslim society. Throughout the past centuries, they have presented the firmest answers and solutions to these doubts.

Anchored in the responsibilities it is shouldering, the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) World Assembly has embarked upon defending the sanctity of *risālah* [messengership] and its authentic beliefs—truths which have always been opposed by the chiefs and leaders of anti-Islamic sects, religions and trends. In this sacred path, the Assembly regards itself as a follower of the upright pupils of the school of the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa)—those who have always been ready to refute those accusations and calumnies and have tried to be always in the frontline of this struggle on the basis of the expediencies of time and space.

The experiences in this field, which have been preserved in the books of scholars belonging to the school of the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa), are unique in their own right. It is because these experiences have been based upon knowledge [*ʿilm*] and the preeminence of the intellect and reasoning, and at the same time, they are completely devoid of blind prejudice, whim and caprice. These experiences address experts, scholars and thinkers in a manner that is acceptable to a healthy mind and the pure human natural disposition [*fiṭrah*].

In a bid to assist those who are in quest of truth, the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) World Assembly has endeavored to enter a new phase of these worthy experiences within the framework of research and translating the works of contemporary Shīʿah writers or those who, through divine guidance, have embraced this noble school.

The Assembly is also engaged in the study and publication of the valuable works of pious predecessors and outstanding Shīʿah personalities so that those who are thirsty for the truth could quench their thirst from this refreshing fountain by listening and embracing this truth, which the Holy Prophet's Household (ʿa) has offered as a gift to the entire world.

It is hoped that our dear readers would not deprive the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) World Assembly of their valuable opinions, suggestions and constructive criticisms in this arena.

We also invite scholars, translators and other institutions to assist us in propagating the pure Muḥammadan (ṣ) Islam.

We ask God, the Exalted, to accept this trivial effort and enhance it further under the auspices of His vicegerent on earth, Imam al-Mahdī (may Allah, the Exalted, expedite his glorious advent).

The Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) World Assembly would like to express special gratitude to Shaykh Bāqir Sharīf al-Qarashī the author of this book, Mr. Badr Shahin the translator, and all the people who have contributed to this project.

Finally, we hope that we have fulfilled a part of our duty towards the Mission of our Great Lord Who "sent His Messenger with the guidance and the true religion that He may make it prevail over all the religions; and Allah is enough for a witness. (48/28)"

The Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) World Assembly
Cultural Affairs Department

FOREWORD

All political conferences in the world may gain success in their endeavors, and the names of their members may be recorded in the immortal list of the patriotic loyalists only when they adopt the genuine objectives that are sought after by the nations for the purpose of procuring their independency and freedom as well as maintaining the other economical and educational rights. However, if such conferences fail to regard such purposes and the conferees seek after personal gains, such as winning power or snatching the fortunes of their homelands, they will most certainly devastate the constituents of their nations, rip apart their unity, and cast them in bottomless abyss.

The first political, yet conspiratorial, conference that was held in Islam was the Saqīfah Conference, which was held immediately after the passing away of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and before his holy body was buried. The dispute of the conferees came to a head, since all of them tried his best to take over power but none of them said a single word of demanding to observe the interest of the Muslim nation or to guarantee its rights after it had been exposed to the astounding misfortune of losing the Holy Prophet, their actual savior. No single historical document has conveyed a decisive situation of any of these conferees, even if such situation would have been demanding that the election of the next ruler should be postponed until the situations of the nation would return in good order and only then, the publics would elect a leader.

A swift look into the history of Islam demonstrates obviously the scope of the huge struggle for leadership of the Muslim nation between the Muhājirūn[1] under the leadership of Abū-Bakr, and the Anṣār[1] under the

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[1] *Muhājirūn* (emigrants) are the early Muslims of Makkah who had to flee their

➔➔

leadership of Saʿd ibn ʿAbādah. Under that Saqīfah (i.e. shed), Abū-Bakr's voice was heard shouting and addressing the Anṣār with the following words: "We are the leaders and you are the vicegerents." As understood by some critical analysts, these words came to raise hopes for gaining the next leadership in the Anṣār or to express a bribe offered to them by Abū-Bakr.

However, the most unanimous point with regard to the members of this conspiratorial meeting was that none of them paid the least attention to the custody of Muslims and none looked deeply in their social affairs and in what should be the best for them in their present and future. In other words, all such issues were thrown in the wastebasket. In conclusion, the members of that conference dedicated all their concerns to their personal interests, leaving the public interests and the safety of the Muslim nation behind their backs.

Owing to his diplomacy, tactfulness, and coarseness of his patron and the builder of his government; namely, ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, Abū-Bakr won the struggle and could seize power. However, homage was not paid to him as the next leader of the Muslim nation by many great personalities at top of whom was the chief of the Holy Prophet's Household and the divinely designated leader and commander of the faithful believers; namely, Imam ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib, as well as many other dignitaries like the great companion of the Holy Prophet ʿAmmār ibn Yāsir, the notable person Abū-Dharr al-Ghifārī, the loyal companion Salmān al-Fārisī whom the Holy Prophet (ṣ) attached to himself, and many other important personalities.

By means of violence and austerity, ʿUmar coerced the publics to pay homage to Abū-Bakr as the successor of the Holy Prophet (ṣ).

The details of these incidents will be investigated through a free analysis in this book as a result of the conclusions to which I have reached through my deep exploration of the historical documents involved.

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homeland and resettle in Yathrib (lately, *al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah)*.

(1) *Anṣār* (helpers) are the people of Yathrib who supported and welcomed the Holy Prophet (s) and the early Muslims of Makkah.

Impartially and away from any sectarial inclination or proclivity, I can say that the Saqīfah conspiratorial conference has undeniably kindled inextinguishable seditions among Muslims and cast them in grave cataclysms.

All the terror-stricken events that have been suffered by Muslims were direct outcomes of the Saqīfah conspiracy. One of these shocking events was the tragedy of Karbalā' in which the Holy Prophet's privilege with regard to his descendants was extremely violated when the swords of the Umayyad tyrants and their fans cut off the heads of the Holy Prophet's descendants and threw their bodies headless on the desert of Karbalā'. They then made the veiled women of the Holy Prophet's Household suffer various kinds of humiliation and disgrace that were too bitter to be described.

Referring to this horrible event, Shaykh Kāshif al-Ghiṭā', a Shī'ite master scholar, composed a poetic line, saying:

By Allah I swear this: The tragedy of Karbalā' would not have taken place had it not been for their Saqīfah. *The like of such branches were only the outcome of that origin.*

Likewise, Paul Salāmah, a famous Lebanese poet, has composed the following couple of verses:

Under that Saqīfah, many events followed in succession,
bringing into surface many tendencies and hidden feelings.
Since that day, many inclinations have dispersed
just like the branches of fresh boxthorn that are thorny and barbed.

If truth be told, the Saqīfah conspiratorial conference was the exordium of all the devastating catastrophes that have been suffered by Muslims since the dawn of their history and hitherto.

It seems disloyal to the nation, history, and science to keep some of such grave events, which are strongly connected to our intellectual and doctrinal lives, concealed from people or to enfold their affairs and causes without exposing them to study and analysis. In fact, concealment of such events is eradication of facts, seducing the nation into ignorance, elimination of the reason-based judgments, and exclusion of the scientific methodologies in forming a free opinion about the events.

The Saqīfah conspiratorial conference has been one of the most sensitive events in the history of Muslims; it is therefore indispensable to study it honestly and truthfully on the light of intellectuality and science, away from sectarial inclinations. Certainly, to study and ponder over this event, along with its details, will beget fruitful outcomes to the Muslim nation, one of which should be reunification and concord.

It is also illogic to agree with those who claim the necessity of canceling out, ignoring, and avoiding investigating any aspect of this event because, as they justify, it causes damage to the dignity of some *Ṣaḥābah* (companions of the Holy Prophet) and injures their standings and holiness. Assuredly, such claim is irrelevant, because any scientifically based research is too fair to intend offense to any person, because it is required to demonstrate the facts that are concealed from people.

What really causes damage, disunity, and offense is deception and concealment of the truth by casting curtains on whatever is expected to benefit people and correct their doctrines and beliefs.

Thus, to demonstrate the facts of history as exactly as they are and clear of telling lies or showing malice neither sows disunity nor beaks off any tie.

Supported by the most authenticated scientific and historical documents, this book, in the first parts of it, discusses the attitude of Islam to caliphate (i.e. religious and civil succession to the Holy Prophet), proving that it is inseparable part of the Muslims' lives, since it was highly stressed by the Holy Prophet (ṣ) who also highlighted its necessity and it is thus an essential element in the political and social lives of Muslims to the extent that they cannot attain normal progression without it. Through the discussion of this topic, I will prove that the Holy Prophet (ṣ), having adopted a positive course with regard to the next leadership of the Muslims, designated Imam ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib (ʿa) as the next leader of the Muslims and the commander-in-chief of their progression. He thus imparted to him many clear-cut names and descriptions like *waṣī* (successor), *bāb madīnat al-ʿilm* (the door to the city of knowledge), and *amīr al-mu'minīn* (the commander of the faithful believers).

The book then discusses the gravest seditious ordeal with which the Muslims were tried severely; namely, the event of the Saqīfah conspiratorial conference, objectively, comprehensively, and away from any emotional or sectarial tendencies. After that, the book deals with some relevant issues.

Most certainly, none of these discussions carries any intention of disuniting or breaking off the ties of Muslims; rather, they are serious discussions of the most critical event in the political history of Muslims.

Embarkation upon such topics that are related to our doctrines is required to be impartial and dissociated from any reckless propensity that leads to misleading, destruction, disuniting, or ripping asunder the unity of Muslims.

Proudly, Islam opposes intellectual stagnancy and calls to giving way to free thinking in investigating the course of events. Moreover, Islam has nothing at all to do with imitation in doctrines; rather, all Muslims are required to look with the eye of full awareness to the facts of events and to open wide the horizons of their thought with regard to their doctrinal and historical issues. The Umayyad and ʿAbbāsid dynasties, purposefully, fabricated *traditions* that are related to the doctrines and history of Muslims in order to invent justifiable foundations for their governments that were basically founded on oppression and tyranny as well as humiliating and suppressing the Muslims.

Unfortunately, the doctrinal affairs of Muslims were deliberately intermixed with many other topics and fabrications that lack any amount of accuracy. In view of that, it is necessary to investigate such issues with full awareness and consideration so as to maintain Islam and save its genuineness and dignity.

Bāqir Sharīf al-Qarashī
Holy Najaf, 15/8/1425 AH

PREAMBLE

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) ignited his giant revolution in an ignorant society that lacked any gleam of light in its inner self; it abided in ignorance, held to the sins of life, buried alive the newborn girls, and built its economical life on oppression and transgression. The powerful among them used to invade the week and usurp their lives. In few words, this society was dispossessed of any constituent of civilization and of any human value. The youths, the juveniles, and the old used to revel in the fields of amusement, dissipation, and impudence.

The blessed revolution of Islam created a devastating quake in this society of lowly customs and traditions. The first spark of light raised by the Holy Prophet (ṣ) in Makkah was the statement of '*There is no god save Allah*,' which is the most precious thing in the world and the secret of life in this universe. As a second stage, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) took upon himself the mission of washing their brains and purifying their souls from the filth of paganism and worshipping the idols that they themselves had made and positioned in Makkah.

Upon seeing this change, the polytheists of Makkah realized that the earth had been quaked under their feet and they hoped that they had been swallowed by it before they would witness this revolution, especially when they saw Imam ʿAlī, the Commander of the Faithful, go up the Holy Prophet's shoulders, take their idols that were positioned on the roof of the Holy Kaʿbah, and throw them on the ground, raising his voice with Almighty Allah's words: "*The truth has come and the falsehood has vanished. Surely, falsehood is a vanishing thing*. (17/81)"

Upon witnessing this scene, the polytheists burst in anger, flew off the handle, and the earth, vast as it is, was straitened for them.

Let us now refer to some glimpses of the principles of Islam as briefed in the following points:

1. Islam has proclaimed the observation of human rights. It thus raised the motto of establishing absolute justice among people. This justice included such items like perfect equality of all human beings in rights, duties, taxes, and financial rights, which must be levied by the ruling authorities and distributed among the needy people equally. For instance, there is no discrimination among the classes of the society in receiving the poor-rate (i.e. *zakāt*).

Islam has also declared that all people, be they the head of the state or the lowliest social class, are equal before the law and none is privileged with immunity when any law of Almighty Allah is violated.

2. Islam has laid emphasis on the necessity of spreading knowledge and eliminating ignorance. It has thus declared that seeking knowledge is a duty imposed on every Muslim male and female. Putting this principle in practice, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) offered to the polytheist prisoners of the Battle of Badr to teach some Muslim juveniles as ransom for obtaining their freedom. The Holy Prophet's Mosque in al-Madīnah was a center of learning the religious laws and the Islamic manners. At this mosque, the majority of the Holy Prophet's companions received knowledge and reported many of his discourses, laws, traditions, and manners.

3. Islam has forbidden usury in all of its categories. Before that, usury was widely circulated in Makkah; therefore, the fortunes were accumulated in the hands of some usurers like Abū-Sufyān the head of the Umayyad family, Hind his wife and Muʿāwiyah's mother, al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, Abū-Jahl, and other tyrants of Quraysh. On the other side, the poor people had to mortgage their sons to these usurers in order to obtain some usurious money.

As a result of the forbiddance of usury, the rich heads of Quraysh could not put up with this new law, because usury was the heart of the economy of Makkah. One of its bad consequences was the widespread of poverty and destitution among the majority of people while finances were accumulated by the usurers.

4. Another most important feature of Islam was the liberation of women from servitude, suppression, and humility, and declaring them equal to men in all rights and duties.

The society of the pre-Islamic era exceeded all limits in humiliating and belittling women who were at that time merchandized just like any other stock. Moreover, some tribes used to bury the newborn girls alive, considering this shameful act as one of the nobilities of character. When one of their sons died, his father would marry his wife or marry her off to someone and seize her dowry.

When Islam came, it carried bliss for women who could find under the shadow of its legislations the dignity that no other religion or social system has ever given to them all over history. One of the features of the Holy Prophet's custody of women is that he declared that the best of men is he who best regards his women. The Holy Prophet (ṣ) thus said:

> The most virtuous of you all are the most virtuous to their women. I am therefore the most virtuous to my women. No one confers honor upon women but the noble and no one disgraces them but the lowly.[1]

In his meetings and from the minbar (i.e. pulpit) of his mosque, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) used to celebrate the virtues of his daughter Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa). A big number of traditions about the highness of her standing and extraordinary status has been unanimously reported from him.

For instance, he (ṣ) is reported to have said to her (ʿa):

> Verily, Allah is angry when you are angry and is pleased when you are pleased.[2]
>
> Fāṭimah is part of my flesh; whoever makes her angry will have made me angry.[3]
>
> Exclusively, Fāṭimah is a branch of me; whatever relieves her will relieve me and whatever exacerbates her will exacerbate me.[4]

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[1] Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 16:408.

[2] Al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 3:153; Ibn al-Athīr, *Usd al-Ghābah fī Maʿrifat al-Ṣaḥābah* 5:522; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *al-Iṣābah fī Tamyīz al-Ṣaḥābah* 8:159; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb* 2:441; al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 6:219; al-Fayrūzābādī, *Faḍā'il al-Khamsah min al-Ṣiḥāḥ al-Sittah* 3:156; al-Dhahbī, *Mīzān al-Iʿtidāl* 1:525.

[3] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* 4:210 & 219; al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 6:210; al-Mannāwī, *Fayḍ al-Qadīr Sharḥ al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaghīr* 1:421.

[4] Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 12:111; al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, *al-*

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All these tradition point to two facts:

a) Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (the Luminous) enjoys a high standing and rank in the view of Almighty Allah and His Messenger.

b) Muslims must learn how to confer honor upon their women and how to deal with them with deference and tribute.

5. In his capacity as the leader and the person responsible for teaching and putting into practice the laws of Islam, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) adopted the weak, the slaves, and the men and women whom were socially oppressed under his custody. In turn, these people received the Holy Prophet (ṣ) warmly, believed in his mission, and knew for certain that they would be the chiefs of the future while the tyrants of Quraysh would be the slaves and the weak.

In this connection, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) is reported to have said to his followers:

> Allah the All-exalted has honored by means of Islam those who were humble and humiliated those who were mighty.[1]

The poor, weak, and miserable people got on intimate terms with Islam because it removed the distinctions between the others and them, removed whatever rancor they would find in their hearts, and covered it with mutual love and felicity.

Likewise, a big number of women believed in Islam so steadfastly that they would set against their polytheist husbands and relatives. As a result, the tyrants of Quraysh jumbled and incurred the animosity of Islam although this religion intended nothing for them but bliss and honorable life that is based on virtue.

Disturbance of the Polytheists of Quraysh

The polytheists of Quraysh were extremely disturbed by the Holy Prophet (ṣ) who stultified their beliefs and depreciated the idols they and their fathers used to worship. He then called them to serve Allah, the Creator of the universe and the One and Only God Who holds all things under His control. The Holy Prophet (ṣ) proved that the idols that they had

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Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn 3:154.

[1] Shaykh al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī* 5:340, H. 1.

made with their own hands and then served as deities could neither benefit nor harm them. He also criticized their wicked traditions and customs, such as consuming intoxicants, committing adultery, and perpetrating indecencies.

The polytheists of Makkah could not stand such Prophetic teachings and revolution, because mutinies against them increased gradually, their slaves began to disobey them, and some of their sons and women joined the new religion. As an attempt to find a solution, they held a meeting and decided to impute to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) false accusations so as to make people turn away from him. They therefore accused him of telling lies, sorcery, and insanity.

As a natural result, all these attempts went on the blink, because the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had been already well known by all of them for his honesty and trustworthiness. He had nothing to do with sorcery and he was characterized by everybody as the most reasonable of all their men. Hence, these accusations could not find any ground.

Persecuting the Believers Physically

The tyrannical chiefs of Quraysh wreaked their wrath upon the weak people who believed in Islam and upon the slaves who did not have any shelter to resort to. They persecuted ʿAmmār and his parents Yāsir and Sumayyah so brutally that they martyred both the parents. However, ʿAmmār survived their various sorts of physical torture. They also persecuted Bilāl al-Ḥabashī (i.e. of Abyssinia), ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd, and many others with the cruelest sorts of physical torture. However, these fresh Muslims did not care for the persecution; rather, they showed steadfastness, did not abandon their new faith, and ridiculed the persecutors.

Emigration to Abyssinia

Muslims had to flee to Abyssinia (currently Ethiopia) so as to escape the torture and violence of the chiefs of Quraysh. They thus turned to a country where they would be able to worship Almighty Allah freely and carry out their religious duties safely. In this new land, they did not fear the plots of the conspirers and the injustice of the tyrants anymore. Although the chiefs of Quraysh did their best to force these Muslims to return to Makkah in order to torture them over again, the king of Abyssinia did not consent to the demand of the chiefs of Quraysh; rather, he kept the Muslims under his protection to practice their devotional acts safely and securely.

Among those who migrated to Abyssinia was Jaʿfar ibn Abī-Ṭālib, the immortal martyr, the brother of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), and the cousin of the Holy Prophet (ṣ). Carrying his faith, he had to flee his homeland, leaving behind him his city and family. He acted as source of amusement for the other emigrants who were distressed by their alienation, remoteness from their homeland, and separation from their people and homes. Jaʿfar showed them a high level of lenience and took part in their pains and grievances.

The Holy Prophet in Yathrib

The tyrannical chiefs of Quraysh agreed unanimously upon assassinating the Holy Prophet (ṣ) after he had lost his uncle Abū-Ṭālib who always protected his faith and him with all means possible. After the demise of Abū-Ṭālib, the tyrants of Quraysh deemed the Holy Prophet (ṣ) weak, helpless, and unaided, since he did not have any one else to protect him.

Heavily armed, the criminal gang who decided to eliminate the Holy Prophet (ṣ) physically gathered around his house in the darkest hours of night. Historicists affirm that this gang was composed of forty men.

However, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) left his house while they were encompassing it, took a handful of dust and threw it on their filthy faces while repeating this holy verse: "*And We have made before them a barrier and a barrier behind them, then We have covered them over so that they do not see.* (36/9)"

Before that, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had ordered his brother, successor, and cousin Imam ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib (ʿa) to replace him in his bed so that the assassinators would believe that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) was still there. Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) spent that night with supplication and implorations to Almighty Allah to save the Holy Prophet (ṣ) from the hands of that bunch of criminals. With the first sparks of dawn, the criminals attacked the Holy Prophet's house, believing that he was still in his bed.

Immediately, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) stood up and unsheathed his sword to face them. Surprised by this situation, they cried out, "Where is Muḥammad?" Intensely and strictly, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) replied, "Have you appointed me as his guard?"

Thus, the criminals, defeated and followed by disgrace and shame, went back to their houses.

In the meantime, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) was on his way to Yathrib. He headed for a mountain and entered a cave therein. He was accompanied by Abū-Bakr who was encompassed by terror and fear from the tyrants of Quraysh. Having noticed so, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) tried to calm him down by saying, "Do not panic. Allah the All-exalted is with us."

About this incident, this holy verse was revealed:

> If you will not aid him, Allah certainly aided him when those who disbelieved expelled him, he being the second of the two, when they were both in the cave, when he said to his companion, 'Grieve not! Surely, Allah is with us.' So Allah sent down His tranquility upon him and strengthened him with hosts which you did not see, and made lowest the word of those who disbelieved; and the word of Allah, that is the highest; and Allah is Mighty, Wise. (9/40)

Paying no heed to anyone, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) moved along towards Yathrib. When he reached there, he was received so warmly that all the inhabitants of this city went out to welcome him with cheerful exclamations and pleasant faces. In Yathrib, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) could find protection, security, thorough response to his call, and strong faith. These factors delighted him very much.

Foundation of the Islamic State

In Yathrib (lately called *al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*), the Holy Prophet (ṣ) started establishing his great state that adopted positively and applicably the human rights, dignity, security, luxury, and teaching. First, he (ṣ) founded a mosque to be the center of his government. From this mosque, all decisions were taken, all laws were enforced, and all treaties and truces were concluded.

Let us now refer to a number of the Prophetic declarations that were issued in this mosque:

Islamic Brotherhood

As soon as he resided in al-Madīnah, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) declared the principle of Islamic brotherhood. Practically, he brought into fraternal association each couple of Muslim individuals; one from the Muslims of Makkah who had emigrated to Yathrib and another from the inhabitants of Yathrib who supported and received his companions and him. In other words, he fraternized a member of the tribe of al-Aws with another from

the tribe of al-Khazraj; the two major tribes that lived in Yathrib. He also fraternized a member of the emigrants of Makkah (Muhājirūn*i*) with a member of the citizens of Yathrib (Anṣār).

In fact, this fraternity is considered closer and firmer than family and blood ties.

No one remained except the Holy Prophet (ṣ) who fraternized with Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and said to him,

> You are my brother in this world and the Next World.[1]

Enactment of Laws

It is understood that any human civilization cannot appear except under the shade of certain laws through which the subjects are protected against any violation and all the general and individual rights of both the community and the individuals are secured. In plain words, there is no civilization unless there are laws governing it. This fact has been confirmed by all jurists.

Following this rule, Islam has enacted laws some of which appertained to the government as a whole, and others appertained to the interior, exterior, economic, military, and official affairs. The articles of all of these laws can obviously be seen in the famous epistle of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) to Mālik al-Ashtar when he appointed him as the deputy governor of Egypt. Besides, we can put our hands on other political documents of Muslim leaders that precisely and objectively treated all the affairs that are related to the Islamic government, such as contracts and treaties with the other states and governments.

No matter to which level human civilizations can reach and whatever governmental laws they can enact, no civilization can ever ratify such political systems that Islam has performed, since these laws and systems are still proceeding in conformity with all ages and all global advancements.

Overseeing profoundly and comprehensively the progress of human beings from the beginning of their creation to the last stage of their lifetimes, Islam has enacted the most wonderful and most genuine laws.

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhī* 2:299; al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 3:14.

To have a scrutinizing look at these laws, the gentle reader is advised to refer to my book entitled *al-Islām manhajun mushriqun lil-ḥayāt* (Islam: A Bright Approach of Life).

To sum it up, this huge endeavor of laws and regulations that were enacted by Islam through the Holy Prophet (ṣ) cannot be left without appointing an honest guardian to put them into effect precisely. In other words, it is impossible, ineffectual, and unfeasible to claim that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had neglected the issue of appointing one as the next leader thoroughly and allowed Muslims to do whatever they wish in this regard, because this issue is related to the destiny of Muslims. Hence, it is ridiculous to believe that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) left his community before he had nominated his successor.

This point will be further discussed in the coming topics of the book.

Panic of the Chiefs of Quraysh

Back to our main topic, the polytheists of Quraysh lost control of themselves when they knew about the Holy Prophet's successful flight from Makkah and migration to Yathrib. They knew for sure that he (ṣ) should take after them to avenge himself on them for what they had excessively done against him and for the torture, persecution, and attempts of assassination they had committed against him and his believing companions. They believed that they had no chance but to fight against him to kill his followers and him. They therefore mobilized armies to fight him.

The Battle of Badr

Among the many wars that the disbelievers of Makkah waged against the Holy Prophet (ṣ) was the conflict known as the Battle of Badr. This conflict was under the commandership of Abū-Jahl, the most vehement enemy of the Holy Prophet (ṣ). This man led a big army to protect Abū-Sufyān on his commercial journey back from Syria along with the money and goods he had brought with him from there for the chiefs of Quraysh. The Holy Prophet (ṣ) had ordered his companions to confiscate these money and goods so that Muslims would be financially strong and a deathblow would be targeted at the polytheists of Quraysh. When Abū-Sufyān knew about this, he took another way that spared his life. The army of the polytheists came from Makkah towards a region called Badr where there was a famous spring. This spring had been already controlled

by the Holy Prophet and his followers so as to waylay Abū-Sufyān's commercial caravan. Abū-Jahl, along with the officers of his army, decided to attack the Holy Prophet's army, because this army was little in comparison with Abū-Jahl's huge army and armaments. So, they attacked the Muslims. In this battle, Almighty Allah decided victory to be the Muslims'; therefore, Abū-Jahl and his troops were heavily defeated and they suffered gross casualties. The Muslims could kill Abū-Jahl and many other chiefs of Quraysh and could capture seventy warriors. The dead bodies of the dead were thrown in a well situated in that region. Muslims could also take as booty the majority of the enemies' military equipments.

In the Battle of Badr, the polytheists were defeated. The majority of their human casualties were killed by the sword of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), as has been confirmed by reference books of history.

The Battle of Badr thus recorded a categorical victory for Muslims and a humiliating defeat for their enemies whose hearts were full of terror, while the Muslims' hearts were full of faith and certitude of victory.

The Battle of Uḥud

The polytheists of Quraysh who could escape the deadly strikes of Imam ʿAlī's sword returned to Makkah broken and humiliated. They shed heavy tears for their victims. Their women received them with lamentation and expressions of grief for this severe loss. Hind, the mother of Muʿāwiyah ibn Abī-Sufyān, felt great sorrow, since her father, brother, and other family members were killed in this battle. She thus forbade weeping for these losses so that grievance would not leave the hearts before they would revenge them on the Holy Prophet (ṣ). Thus, the polytheists of Quraysh restarted mobilizing more troops and preparing more weapons and arms.

Under the commandership of Abū-Sufyān, they advanced to fight against the Holy Prophet (ṣ), although this divine man had come to liberate them, save them from the fables of the pre-Islamic era of ignorance, and grant them immortal integrity and glory.

The two armies reached Mount Uḥud. The army of the Muslims settled in the versant of this mountain and the Holy Prophet (ṣ) ordered the shooters to settle on the mountain's top so as to hold back the sneaking enemies from attacking the Muslims from the backside. With the first

strikes of the battle, the Muslims commanded by Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) could defeat the polytheists. However, when the shooters saw how the enemies were defeated and forced to retreat, they left their positions and hurried to collect the spoils of the war. Seizing this opportunity, Khalīd ibn al-Walīd who led a troop of the polytheistic enemies occupied the positions left by the Muslim shooters. He then attacked the Muslim army from the rear while the absconding troops returned and attacked the Muslims from the front. Hence, the Muslim troops were surrounded from both sides. In this battle, great Muslim personalities, on the top of whom was the champion Ḥamzah ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, were martyred. The enemies surrounded the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and could cause him many wounds. Sparing no single effort, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) hurried to protect the Holy Prophet (ṣ). Had it not been for ʿAlī (ʿa), the Holy Prophet (ṣ) could have been killed there.

Hind hurried to the dead body of the martyr Ḥamzah and mutilated it so maliciously. She took out the liver and chewed it.[1] She then cut off some of his body parts and used them as necklace! Likewise, Abū-Sufyān stopped at the dead body of Ḥamzah, kicked it, and showed rejoicing and gloating.

The troops of the polytheists returned to Makkah chanting songs of victory and vengeance on the Holy Prophet (ṣ).

These were some of the fierce conflicts that the polytheists of Quraysh waged restlessly against the Holy Prophet (ṣ) as attempts to suppress his voice and extinguish the lights of his principles and values. However, Almighty Allah eventually gave His Prophet victory, supported His religion, and protected His Messenger.

The Conquest of Makkah

After that, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) rebuilt his armed forces and supplied them with all sorts of weapons and equipments. As a result, he had in a short time the most powerful armed forces of that age. Leading them, he advanced towards conquering Makkah. His advancement towards Makkah was however secret; lest, the polytheists of Quraysh would know about the matter and then a military conflict would take place and

[1] For this reason, Hind is known as the liver-eater.

casualties would fall. Another reason for this secrecy was that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) wanted Makkah to be a secure place and free of any bloodshed.

When the Muslim army was on the outskirts of Makkah, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) ordered all of his soldiers to kindle fire in the darkness of night. When fires flamed, their light covered all the quarters of Makkah. Panicked by this scene, Abū-Sufyān said, "I have never seen such fire at any other night." Badīl ibn Warqā', who was next to Abū-Sufyān, trying to furnish a justifying explanation, said, "By God, these fires must have been kindled by the tribe of Khuzāʿah to declare a war." Disproving his explanation, Abū-Sufyān said, "The troops of the tribe of Khuzāʿah are too little and too humble to cause such fires."

Al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, having recognized Abū-Sufyān's voice, called at him with his epithet: "Abū-Ḥanẓalah!" Abū-Sufyān answered back, "Abu'l-Faḍl!" Al-ʿAbbās said, "Woe to you, Abū-Sufyān! This is the Messenger of Allah leading the people. What a disgracing mourning the people of Quraysh will see if he (i.e. the Prophet) conquers Makkah by force!"

Trembling all over, Abū-Sufyān asked with a disrupting accent, "What should we do? May my father and mother be sacrificed for you?"

Then, al-ʿAbbās asked Abū-Sufyān to ride behind him on his riding animal and led him to the Holy Prophet (ṣ). Before the Holy Prophet (ṣ), al-ʿAbbās said, "I have granted this man immunity!" Hence, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said, "Now, escort him to your place. In the morning, bring him to me."

The next morning, Abū-Sufyān, trembling and fearing the Holy Prophet (ṣ), was brought before him. The Holy Prophet (ṣ) asked him, "Abū-Sufyān, woe to you! Have you not yet known that there is no god save Allah?" With a low tone, Abū-Sufyān said, "May my father and mother be sacrificed for you! You are so lenient, so noble, and so observant of relation ties! By God, I believe that if there had been any other god beside Allah, he should have saved me!"

Answering him, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said, "Abū-Sufyān, woe to you! Have you not yet known that I am the messenger of Allah?"

Rudely, Abū-Sufyān answered, "May my father and mother be sacrificed for you! You are so lenient and so observant of relation ties! By God, I have some reservation about this!"

Here, al-ʿAbbās reproached Abū-Sufyān and ordered him to declare that Muḥammad is the messenger of Allah; lest, he would be beheaded.

Having had no other way, Abū-Sufyān had to say the two professions of faith of Islam. However, his heart was still full of disbelief.

Then, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) issued a general amnesty for all the people of Quraysh who had stood against him, fought him, and spent whatever they had in possession to eliminate him.

Nonetheless, the conquest of Makkah was a turning stage in the history of Islam. This incident imparted to Muslims more power and invulnerability and made the opposing powers believe that they can no longer resist this religion; therefore, they had no other choice than declaring their conversion to Islam in order to spare their lives even if this declaration was only verbal, while in their inner selves they were disbelievers and hypocrites.

THE ANTI-ISLAM FRONT

Hereinafter, I will review the powers that stood and bore a grudge against Islam, waited the befalling of calamities to it, and did not stop hatching conspiracies and schemes against it:

The Hypocrites

The group of hypocrites includes those whose tongues declared conversion to Islam while their hearts were fully involved with disbelief and hypocrisy. They form the greatest danger against Islam, because an interior enemy is always more dangerous than the exterior. These people used to spread animosity among Muslims and distort the words of Almighty Allah. Once, they built a mosque and requested the Holy Prophet (ṣ) to offer a prayer therein. However, when he knew about the actual intention of these people, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) ordered their mosque to be set on fire.

On account of the mass danger they caused to Islam, an entire Qur'ānic chapter (i.e. Sūrah) was revealed to disclose their manners, malice, and hypocrisy. Abū-Sufyān and the majority of the members of the Banū-Umayyah tribe were on the top of the list of the hypocrites, since Islam has annihilated their chiefs and stamped out their interests and influence.

The Jews

The Jews were always the rivals and enemies of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) whose military victories shocked them. They were also astounded by the Holy Prophet's magnificent laws and eminent teachings that affected all hearts. In the Arab Peninsula, the Jews were the striking power. They took upon themselves the mission of fighting against Islam. They had supplied Abū-Sufyān with finance and military equipments in order to clash the Holy Prophet (ṣ). Moreover, they dedicated all their economic capacities to challenging Islam and eliminating the Holy Prophet (ṣ).

Once the Holy Prophet (ṣ) realized that the Jews stood for the greatest danger that threatened his mission and that Islam would not rule completely as long as they stood against it, he faced them determinedly and banished the Banu'l-Naḍīr Jewish tribe from al-Madīnah his capital. Due to this procedure, the capital of the Islamic state was clear of the Jews. Moreover, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) waged a war against the Jews in the fortresses of Khaybar and eliminated their heads and chiefs.

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) regarded the Jews as a destructive element in the human community; he therefore warned against their evils more than once. In this respect, al-Wāqidī, a historicist, has reported that the Holy Prophet (ṣ), in his last will, said, "Take the Jews out of your peninsula."

The previously mentioned topics regarding the sufferings of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) are only introductory topics to the coming discussions in this book, all of which revolve round the fact that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) did not depart this world before he had appointed a leader to guide and direct his community and to act as the guardian and trustee over his huge efforts of establishing and circulating the values and principles of Islam.

To claim that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) neglected the critical issue of appointing a next leader and left his community to choose a leader for themselves is in reality one of the weakest and shallowest opinions, because this is in violation of the line of the divine mission that aims at protecting the community from deviation and behavioral retardation.

Indeed, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) constructed the protective fence that shields his community against seditious matters and deviations all of the stages of history to include all generations. This fence is namely the Holy Qur'ān and the Ahl al-Bayt (i.e. the Holy Prophet's Household). Although he confirmed this fact on many occasions, some of his Companions (i.e.

Ṣaḥābah) broke this fence and declared, "The Book of God is sufficient for us!" Raising this slogan led to the spread of seditions among Muslims, hurled down their principles, and allowed tyrannical people to rule over them. Thus, the Umayyad and then the ʿAbbāsid dynasties ruled over the Muslims tyrannically and circulated injustice, bias, and persecution among them. They also forced them to do what they would not like to do.

CALIPHATE;
AN ISLAMIC NECESSITY

Caliphate; meaning the headship of the Islamic state, the succession to the Holy Prophet, and the chief civil and religious leadership of the Muslim community, is one of the most imperative elements in the composition of the Muslim community. As well, it is one of the most important ingredients of establishing justice in the country. Without caliphate, life cannot stand erect and no shadow of security and settlement can be found.

Relying upon this fact, Islam has paid very much interest to the issue of caliphate and regarded it as one of the foundations of its civilization and indispensable part of the foundations of its mission.

Let us now present, yet briefly, some secondary areas appertained to the main topic under discussion:

Linguistic Denotation of Caliphate

The Arabic word *khilāfah* linguistically means proxy; the agency of a person who acts by appointment instead of another, either because the represented person is absent, dead, or unable to carry out the mission, or it acts as a sign of conferring honor on the representative.[1] About this meaning, the Holy Qur'ān reads,

> Moses said to his brother Aaron: Take my place among my people, act well, and do not follow the way of the mischief-makers. (7/142)[2]

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[1] Bāqir Sharīf al-Qarashī, *Niẓām al-Ḥukm wa'l-Idārah fī'l-Islām* (Government and Administration System in Islam), pp. 207.

[2] To express the idea of *taking one's place among the people*, the Holy Quran has

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Caliphate in the Terminology of Muslim Jurisprudence

In the terminology of Muslim jurisprudence (i.e. *fiqh*), the word *khilāfah* means the general headship of the mundane and religious affairs on behalf of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) in the Muslim community.

Ibn Khaldūn says, "Caliphate (or *khilāfah*) implies to make all people follow the religious views about any issue practically in order to achieve their otherworldly and this worldly interests."

He adds, "In its reality, *khilāfah* is the agency of a person instead of the one who came with the religious law in such matters like guarding the religious affairs and managing the mundane affairs."[1]

To al-Māwardī, caliphate is "to represent the Prophethood in guarding the religion and running the civil affairs."[2]

The Holy Prophet's Attention to Caliphate

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) cared very much for the issue of caliphate, considering it the most important element in the construction of a Muslim community. He threatened with Hellfire those who do not recognize the true leader of their ages. He is thus reported to have said,

> Whoever dies before recognizing the Imam (i.e. leader) of his time, has in fact died as non-Muslim.[3]

Of course, the worst end result of any Muslim is to die as non-Muslim who recognizes neither God nor the true religion.

Likewise, the Holy Qur'ān has ordered us to keep on obedience to the Imam. It thus reads:

> O you who believe, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority from among you. (4/59)

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used to Arabic root *kh-l-f* in a verbal cause. Hence, the word *khalīfah* (Caliph) comes to mean taking one's place and acting on behalf of him. [*Translator*]

[1] *Muqaddimat Ibn Khaldūn*, pp. 166.

[2] Al-Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyyah*, pp. 3.

[3] All Muslims believe unanimously in the authenticity of this tradition.

Another translation of the tradition reads: "He who dies without recognition of the Imam of his time has in fact died just like the ignorant ones who died before accepting Islam."

We thus conclude that obedience to the one in authority (i.e. Imam) is as obligatory as obedience to Almighty Allah and His Prophet. Relying on this, it is awfully strange to claim that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had neglected appointing a representative and a leader to rule after him.

The Holy Prophet Matched Caliphate to Prophethood

Since the dawn of his promulgation for Islam, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) endued Imam ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib (ʿa) with caliphate. This took place when he (ṣ) invited his relatives to believe in his mission. He thus said to them,

> O sons of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib! By Allah, I do not know an Arab man who can bring to his people a matter better than what I am bearing for you. I am conveying to you the welfare of this world as well as the Hereafter. Almighty Allah has ordered me to invite you to this matter. Who will support me in this affair and he will be my brother, successor, and next-in-line amongst you?

They all refrained from responding to him. Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) hurried to answer the Holy Prophet (ṣ) by saying,

> O Messenger of Allah, I will be your supporter in this affair.

Hence, the Holy Prophet (s) grasped him from the neck and said,

> This is truly my brother, successor, and next-in-line amongst you. So, you must listen to and obey him.[1]

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) paid very much attention to the issue of the next leadership (i.e. caliphate); he therefore matched it to the issue of his Prophethood. He then appointed for this position the best of all Muslims in knowledge, piety, and religiousness.

Need for Caliphate

Caliphate is one of the essential necessities of Islam, since it cannot dispense with it. To explain, Islam is full of groups of miscellaneous laws some of which are appertained to the provisions, penal laws, transactions, contracts, and enforcements. Other laws are appertained to the duties of enjoining the right, forbidding the wrong, and struggling for the sake of Almighty Allah. None of these laws can be put into effect unless there is an Islamic government headed by a religious leader who can govern the subjects according to the revelations of Almighty Allah.

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[1] Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Faṣl fī'l-Milal wa'l-Ahwā' wa'l-Niḥal* 4:87.

Unanimity on the inevitability of Caliphate

All Muslims have unanimously agreed on the inevitability of the existence of a caliph (i.e. a leader who represents the Holy Prophet). In this regard, Ibn Ḥazm al-Andalusī says,

> The Ahl al-Sunnah (along with all of their schools and sects), the Murji'ah,[1] the Shīʿah (along with all of their sects), and the Khawārij (along with all of their sects) have unanimously agreed upon the obligation of the existence of an imām. They also unanimously agree that people are obligatorily required to comply with a decently just leader who establishes the laws of Allah amongst them and runs their affairs according to the laws of Islam that came to us via the Messenger of Allah (ṣ). Excepted from all these sects and sub-sects are the Najdāt, a sub-sect of the Khawārij. They claim, "It is not obligatory upon people to appoint an imām; rather, it is sufficient, yet obligatory, for them to run their affairs rightly." In fact, this sub-sect, whose founder is Najdah ibn ʿUmayr al-Ḥanafī, seems to have died out and none of its followers can now be seen. To refute their claim, it is sufficient to take into consideration the fact that this sub-sect is no longer existent. Besides, the unanimity of all the other Islamic sects proves false this claim.[2]

In my book entitled *Niẓām al-Ḥukm wa'l-Idārah fī'l-Islām* (Government and Administration System in Islam), I have provided comprehensively all the points of evidence on the necessity of caliphate, established many proofs on its accuracy, and proved false the claim of ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Razzāq who baselessly argued the necessity of caliphate, stating that it is not obligatory according to the laws of Islam.

Qualifications of the Imam

The Imam who leads the Muslim community must enjoy all the virtuous tendencies and righteous qualifications, such as knowledgeability, piety, rationality, shrewdness, and full acquaintance with all affairs of policy. He must also have familiarity with whatever is needed by the community in its economical and social progress.

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[1] Murji'ah is one of the earliest Islamic sects to believe in the postponement (*irjāʾ*) of judgment on committers of serious sins, recognizing God alone as being able to decide whether or not a Muslim had lost his faith.

[2] Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Faṣl fī'l-Milal wa'l-Ahwāʾ wa'l-Niḥal* 4:87.

The position of the headship of the community must be held by the best of all men in talents, faculties, and expertise in the problems of the world and all of its political systems. Only then can such a leader create a virtuous community that enjoys justice and equality.

Experts of political jurisprudence of Islam have also specified the following points as qualifications that must be enjoyed by one who assumes the leadership of the Muslim community:

1. Decency when all of its requirements are available. In this respect, decency stands for refraining from committing major sins and renouncing insistence on committing the minor ones.

2. Adequate knowledge according to which the ability to infer the most accurate regulations and laws about the new issues is obtained.

3. Soundness of senses, such as hearing, sight, and tongue so that a direct perception through these senses is attained.

4. Soundness of the body limbs against all defects that prevent from positive motion and immediate rising.

5. Unblemished sagacity that leads to running the affairs of the subjects effectively and managing their interests.

6. Courage and intrepidity that lead to protecting Islam and confronting the enemy.

7. Belongingness to the lineage of Quraysh. In other words, the leader of the Muslim community must be a descendant of the tribe of Quraysh.[1]

View of al-Fārābī

In the conception of al-Fārābī, a Muslim philosopher, the head of the perfect state (i.e. Utopia) must be: "wise, physically powerful, well-determined, intelligent, strong-memoried, sharp-witted, eloquent, fond of knowledge, ready to undergo troubles for the sake of learning, moderate in bodily pleasures, truth-loving, noble-minded, fair-minded, non-discriminatory, brave, intrepid… etc."

Al-Fārābī adds, "If these qualifications are missing, the perfect state must be kept without a president, although this is one of the factors that lead to perdition!"[2]

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[1] Al-Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyyah*, pp. 4-5.

[2] Boutrus Ghali, *al-Tanẓīm al-Duwalī* (Global Systemization), pp. 53-5.

This topic has been discussed thoroughly in my book entitled *Niẓām al-Ḥukm wa'l-Idārah fi'l-Islām* (Government and Administration System in Islam).

View of the Shī'ah

The Shīʿah have cared for the issue of caliphate more attentively, cautiously, and profoundly than all the other Muslim sects. To the Shīʿah, a leader of the Muslim community must enjoy certain qualifications, some of which are as follows:

1. ***Infallibility***: By infallibility, the Shīʿah mean evasion of committing all decencies and sins purposefully, mistakenly, and inadvertently throughout the lifetime of the Imam, beginning with his first existence up to the end of his lifetime. In other words, the Imam must be the center of all virtues and perfections all over his lifetime.

Actually, the Shīʿah's evidence on this stipulation is very firm. They have deduced the qualification of infallibility from the reports that recounted the Holy Imams' piety and remoteness from whatever act that might arouse a seditious matter in the religious affairs. In this respect, the chief of the Ahl al-Bayt Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) is reported to have said,

> By Allah, even if I am given all the domains of the seven (stars) with all that exists under the skies in order that I may disobey Allah to the extent of snatching one grain of barley from an ant, I would not do it.[1]

Without doubt, this is the most supreme level of infallibility. Another aspect of Imam ʿAlī's infallibility can be obviously seen in the following incident:

When Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) held the position of caliphate, he noticed that ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās was so vainglorious about this matter, because he believed that the position of the leadership of the Muslim community was given back to the descendants of Hāshim, since Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was his cousin. Meanwhile, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was engaged in amending a sandal made of fibers of date-palm trees.

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[1] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon No. 221.

He asked ʿAbdullāh, "O Ibn ʿAbbās, what is the value of this sandal in your opinion?"

"It is definitely valueless, O Commander of the Faithful," answered ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās.

Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) said confidently,

> In my opinion, this sandal is better to me than holding this position of caliphate, unless I establish the right and repel the wrong.[1]

Is this not infallibility in its brightest aspects?

Another aspect of Imam ʿAlī's infallibility is that when ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf, subsequent to the killing of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, insisted on him to hold the position of caliphate on the condition that he should commit himself to the conduct of Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) refrained from accepting this condition. Instead, he insisted that he would follow the conduct that is compatible with the Book of Allah, the traditions of the Holy Prophet, and his own inferences.

In fact, if Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) had been one of those who sought power, he would have accepted the condition of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf. Then, he could have changed his policy and canceled this condition.

To come to the point, every motion in the conducts of Imam ʿAlī and the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) bears witness that they were infallible. In the famous tradition known as *Ḥadīth al-Thaqalayn*, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) has matched the Holy Imams to the Holy Qur'ān to which "*falsehood shall not come from before it nor from behind it.*" Had they been expected to deviate from the truth, they would not have been matched to the Holy Qur'ān.

The great poet of Islam, al-Kumayt al-Asadī, has described them brilliantly in these poetic verses:

> *They are the closest to the truth and the furthest from injustice in all of their decisions.*
> *They always hit the target when all others miss it. Thus, they alone are the establishers of the rules of Islam.*

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[1] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, 2:185.

They are also the raining clouds and the heroes when people suffer dearth, and they are the shelters of the orphans.

Even if there had been an aspect of piety and faith higher than infallibility, the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) would most surely have been characterized by it and it would have been one of their qualities.

2. ***Knowledge***: Since the dawn of their history and up to the present day, the Shīʿah have believed in the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) as the most knowledgeable of all of the inhabitants of this globe in all fields of science and knowledge. This belief is supported by the firmest proofs.

For instance, when al-Ma'mūn, the ʿAbbāsid ruler, appointed Imam ʿAlī ibn Mūsā al-Riḍā (ʿa) as his heir apparent, he felt envious of the Imam's high personality and great virtue. He therefore gathered all the scholars of the world in Khurasan, met them secretly, and promised of giving them big fortunes if they would ask the Imam (ʿa) a question that he would not be able to answer.

In their turns, these scholars started a campaign of searching for the most complicated and mysterious questions. Once they put these questions before the Imam (ʿa), he answered all of them with full confidence and experience. On that occasion, they asked Imam al-Riḍā (ʿa) about twenty-four thousand questions on miscellaneous fields of knowledge. Any scholastic delegation that met the Imam (ʿa) left him with full faith in Imamate.

Like his father, Imam Muḥammad al-Jawād (ʿa) who was only nine or seven years old, was entrusted with Imamate after his father. It is natural that a seven or nine year old boy is not allowed to discuss philosophical and theological topics. Nevertheless, the ʿAbbāsid ruling authorities agreed to put the Imam (ʿa) to the test, hoping that they would be able to see him fail to manage such topics and thus this would be the best means to devastate the Ahl al-Bayt School, since those who embraced this School had declared that their Imams excelled all other scholars in the various fields of knowledge.

The ʿAbbāsid ruling authorities summoned the scholars of Baghdad, ordered them to put Imam al-Jawād (ʿa) to the test, and held a conference in the main hall of the royal palace, which was attended by all the prominent scholastic personalities of the country. Scholars began to ask the Imam (ʿa) various questions, all of which were answered confidently

and expertly by him in such an extraordinary way that astounded these scholars. In this conference, the Imam (ʿa) was asked about twenty thousand questions in the various fields of knowledge, and he could answer them all. As a result, the ʿAbbāsid tyrannical authorities decided to assassinate the Imam (ʿa).

To come to the point, the knowledge of the Holy Imams were derived from the knowledge of their grandfather the Holy Prophet (ṣ) who caused the springs of knowledge and wisdom to gush out on this globe.

THE IMAM'S DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Islam has charged the one who runs the affairs of Muslims with a number of duties that he must undertake. The most important of these duties are to develop the economical and industrial lives of Muslims and to take them away from all sorts of retardation and deterioration.

The ancient scholars have paid much attention to the duties that are incumbent upon the rulers of Muslims. Let us now refer to a few of these duties and responsibilities:

1. A leader of the Muslim community is responsible for safeguarding the religion of Islam according to its unquestionable fundaments as well as the principles unanimously agreed upon by the past generations. Accordingly, a leader of the Muslim community is required to manifest the truth and demonstrate the most accurate course whenever an innovation or a seditious matter is aroused in the community. If this does not work, then the leader is responsible for stopping the creators of such innovations by means of reproach in order to keep the religion safeguarded and the manners of the community rectified.

2. A leader of the Muslim community is required to protect the religion and defend the inviolabilities so that people will be engaged in their own livings and will spread in the lands while they feel safe for their souls and properties.

3. One of the duties of a leader of the Muslim community is to protect the borders of the Muslim state with sufficient soldiers and equipments in order to prevent the enemies from finding any gap in the borders from which they may commit any sin or shed the blood of a Muslim or a non-Muslim subject who is under the Muslim rule.

4. A leader of the Muslim community is responsible for resisting the polytheists who oppose Islam to make them accept Islam or come under the protection of the Muslim state. This duty is purposed for undertaking one of the responsibilities towards God in order to enable His religion to prevail on all religions.

5. A ruler of the Muslim community is responsible for executing the religious laws and solving all disputes so that no wrongdoer will transgress and no persecuted person will be deemed too feeble to respect.

6. A ruler of the Muslim community is required to execute the religious punishments so that no inviolability is infringed and all souls and properties are protected.

7. A ruler of the Muslim community is responsible for choosing the most honest and most well-qualified persons through whom the properties of people are guarded.

8. A ruler of the Muslim community is required to collect the taxes, alms, and tributes according to the religious laws, whether these laws are established in indisputable texts from the sources of Islamic legislation or inferred according to the deductions of the well-qualified scholars, provided that no harm and violence are made.

9. A ruler of the Muslim community is required to estimate the allowances and to give each subject exactly what he/she deserves from the public treasury without wasting or negligence. He is also required to pay these allowances in their due times, without delay or advancement.

10. A ruler of the Muslim community is involved to apply personal supervision over the public affairs, without relegating this mission to the officials and governors, because it is probable that even an honest person betrays and a well-wisher cheats. In this respect, Almighty Allah has said in the Holy Qur'ān,

> O David! Lo! We have set thee as a viceroy in the earth; therefore, judge aright between mankind, and follow not desire that it beguile thee from the way of Allah. Lo! Those who wander from the way of Allah have an awful doom, forasmuch as they forgot the Day of Reckoning. (38/26)

As mentioned by al-Māwardī, these are the responsibilities that the Muslim rulers are required to undertake.

However, to be more accurate and more profound, it seems desirable to have an idea about Imam ʿAlī's words and deeds in this field, since he is truly the pioneer of social justice.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LEADER FROM IMAM 'ALĪ'S VIEWPOINT

In the view of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), the responsibilities of the leader of the Muslim community comprise all of the political and economical affairs. The coming points will shed more light on this topic.

The Imam is Role-Model

According to the logic of Imam ʿAlī Amīr al-Mu'minīn (ʿa), the ruling system must be polite, honest, and example of good behavior so that the others will pattern after it. The ruler is also required to apply to himself before others all the criteria of justice. In this regard, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) says,

> Whoever places himself as a leader of the people should commence with educating his own self before educating others; and his teaching should be by his own conduct before teaching by the tongue. The person who teaches and instructs his own self is more entitled to esteem then he who teaches and instructs others.[1]

On another occasion, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) said,

> O people! By Allah, I do not impel you to any obedience unless I practice it before you and do not restrain you from any disobedience unless I desist from it before you.[2]

Such are the high idealities of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) that no other ruler has ever applied except him. Hence, he is truly the pioneer of social justice in Islam.

The Imam Shares the Subjects in Vicissitudes of Time

Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) believed that it is obligatory upon a leader of Muslims to share them in vicissitudes of time and in harsh living. Thus, a leader must not outmatch them in ways of dress, food, or housing. In fact, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) applied this principle to himself and used to live the same level of the poor people.

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[1] ʿAllāmah al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār* 2:56, H. 33.

[2] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon No. 174.

He (ʿa) thus says,

> If I wished, I could have taken the way leading towards (worldly pleasures like) pure honey, fine wheat and silk clothes but it cannot be that my passions lead me and greed take me to choosing good meals while in the Ḥijāz or in Yamāmah, there may be people who have no hope of getting bread or who do not have a full meal. Shall I lie with a satiated belly while around me there may be hungry bellies and thirsty livers? Or shall I be as the poet has said?
>
> It is enough for you to have a disease that you lie with your belly full while around you people may be badly yearning for dried leather.
>
> Shall I be content with being called Amīr al-Mu'minīn (The Commander of the Believers), although I do not share with the people the hardships of the world? Or shall I be an example for them in the distresses of life? I have not been created to keep myself busy in eating good foods like the tied animal whose only worry is his fodder or like a loose animal whose activity is to swallow. It fills its belly with its feed and forgets the purpose behind it. Shall I be left uncontrolled to pasture freely, or draw the rope of misguidance or roam aimlessly in the paths of bewilderment?[1]

Can we find all over history such a leader like Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) in his behavior and alienation from worldly pleasures? In fact, Almighty Allah has created Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) to act as a role-model on the earth. He then chose him to be His Messenger's successor, vicegerent, and the next leader.

Precaution in Matters Related to the Public Properties

Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was at the highest level of precaution in matters appertained to the public properties. He did not spend a single penny from the public treasury on his family members and himself; rather, he made his family members stand harsh poverty. On the other hand, he used to spend all the money of the public treasury on the public interests in order to provide for the poor and the financially weak.

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[1] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Epistle No. 45.

One day, some of his companions suggested that he might grant some prominent personalities additional allowances from the public treasury in order to seek their help in fighting his enemy Muʿāwiyah ibn Abī-Sufyān. The Imam (ʿa) refused to accept this suggestion. He thus said,

> Do you command me that I should seek support by oppressing those over whom I have been placed? By Allah, I will not do so as long as the world goes on, and as long as one star leads another in the sky. Even if it were my property, I would have distributed it equally among them, then why not when the property is that of Allah. Beware; certainly that giving of wealth without any right for it is wastefulness and lavishness. It raises its doer in this world, but lowers him in the next world. It honors him before people, but disgraces him with Allah. If a man gives his property to those who have no right for it or do not deserve it, Allah deprives him of their gratefulness, and their love too would be for others. Then if he falls on bad days and needs their help, they would prove the worst comrades and ignoble friends.[1]

About the public funds that ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān embezzled from the public treasury, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) said,

> By Allah, even if I had found that by such money women have been married or slave-maids have been purchased I would have resumed it because there is wide scope in dispensation of justice, and he who finds it hard to act justly should find it harder to deal with injustice.[2]

Instructing one of his officials to economize and not to lean to extravagance, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) said,

> Give up lavishness and be moderate. Every day remember the coming day. Hold back from the funds what you need and send forward the balance for the day of your need.
>
> Do you expect that Allah may give you the reward of the humble while you yourself remain vain in His view? And do you covet that He may give you the reward of those practicing charity while you enjoy comforts and deny them to the weak and the widows?

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[1] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon No. 125.

[2] *Ibid.* Sermon No. 15.

> Certainly, a man is awarded according as he acts and meets what he has sent forward; and that is an end to the matter.[1]

The most important concern that preoccupied Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was to act precautiously towards the public property and to spend them on the financially weak people, the widows, and the orphans in order to meet their needs and save them from misery and deprivation.

An example of Imam ʿAlī's precautious course in the public property is that when he was informed that Ziyād ibn Abīh, the Imam's deputy governor of al-Baṣrah, had taken part of the Muslims' property for himself, he wrote this letter to him:

> I truthfully swear by Allah that if I come to know that you have misappropriated the funds of the Muslims, small or big; I shall inflict upon you such punishment, which will leave you empty, handed, heavy backed and humiliated; and that is an end to the matter.[2]

This is the very justice that Almighty Allah has prescribed for His servants in order to meet their needs from sustenance and to cast the shadow of misery and deprivation away from them.

Another wonderful example of Imam ʿAlī's policy of precaution in the public funds is that ʿAbdullāh ibn Jaʿfar, Imam ʿAlī's nephew and son-in-law (i.e. the husband of Lady Zaynab the daughter of the Imam), came from al-Madīnah to visit the Imam in al-Kūfah and seek financial assistance. He thus said to his uncle, "O Commander of the Believers! I expect that you may grant me some subsidy or financial support, for, by Allah, I have no maintenance left except that I should sell my riding animal."

Answering him, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) said,

> Nay, by Allah! I cannot understand your request in any other way except that you want your uncle to steal and give you![3]

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[1] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Epistle No. 20.

[2] *Ibid.* Epistle No. 21.

[3] ʿAllāmah al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār* 31:51.

This is the very infinite justice that Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) applied to himself before applying it to the others.

Another example of Imam ʿAlī's financial policy based on equitability and justice is the following narration that is reported by Muḥammad ibn Fuḍayl on the authority of Hārūn ibn ʿAntarah on the authority of Zādhān:

One day, Qanbar, the Imam's servant, came to his master and took him from the arm, "O Commander of the Believers, you do not keep any thing of the treasury for yourself or for your household who definitely have a share in this. I therefore have hidden something for you." "What is it?" asked the Imam. "You may come with me and see," answered Qanbar, who led the Imam (ʿa) to a chamber full of golden plates and gilded silver. Once his eyes fell of these, the Imam (ʿa) flamed up with rage and rebuked Qanbar, saying, "May your mother weep for you! You wanted to lead a great flame of fire to my house!" The Imam (ʿa) then weighed these things and distributed them among the people.[1]

Al-Shiʿbī narrated the following incident:

When I was boy, I once traveled to al-Kūfah and entered the courtyard of the mosque there. I found ʿAlī (ʿa) standing on two heaps of silver and gold and holding a belt-like stick in the hand. He used to drive people away with that stick and then return to the heaps to distribute them among them to the last piece. He then left home without carrying with him even one piece of these heaps.

I then returned to my father and said, "I have just seen the best of all people."

"Who is he, son?" asked my father.

I answered, "He is ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib. I have seen him… etc."

My father wept and said, "Surely, you have seen the best of all people."[2]

One account of piety and alienation from worldly pleasures with which Almighty Allah has endued him, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) is really the best of all people.

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[1] Ibn al-Dimashqī, *Jawāhir al-Maṭālib* 1:273.

[2] Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad al-Thaqafī, *al-Ghārāt* 1:54.

Historians have reported that ʻAqīl ibn Abī-Ṭālib, once, visited his brother Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) in al-Kūfah, the capital of his state, and the Imam (ʿa) welcomed him hospitably and ordered his son al-Ḥasan to give him a shirt and a garment as present. When it was time for dinner, the Imam (ʿa) served his brother with bread and salt. Resentfully, ʻAqīl said, "Is that all?" Gently, the Imam (ʿa) answered, "Is this not part of the grace of Allah? Very much praise be to Him for this." ʻAqīl then asked the Imam (ʿa) to give him an amount of money enough to settle his debt so that he would leave as soon as possible. "How much is your debt?" asked the Imam (ʿa). "It is one hundred thousand dirham (a silver coin of that time)," answered ʻAqīl. The Imam (ʿa) said, "In fact, I do not have such an amount right now and I do not possess it. However, you may wait until I receive my salary and halve it with you. I will give it to you entirely, but I have children to feed." Violently, ʻAqīl said, "You have the public treasury in your hand and you want me to wait until you receive your salary? How much is your salary? What will it be even if you give me all of it?" Restlessly, the Imam (ʿa) said, "You and I are exactly equal to any other Muslim individual with regard to the salary I take from the public treasury."

The Imam (ʿa) was prospecting some chests of merchants; he therefore pointed to them and said to ʻAqīl, "If you refuse my offer, you may go down to these chests, break their locks, and take whatever therein." "What are there in these chests?" asked ʻAqīl. "There are funds of the merchants," answered Imam ʿAlī (ʿa). Surprisingly, ʻAqīl said, "Do you want me to break the chest of people who had depended upon the Almighty and put their funds there?" Answering him, the Imam (ʿa) said, "Do you want me to open the funds of the Muslims and give you their shares? They have also depended upon the Almighty and locked on them. If you wish, you and I will unsheathe our swords and leave for al-Ḥīrah where there are rich merchants! We may attack them and take their money!" ʻAqīl answered, "Have I come to you to steal?" The Imam (ʿa) answered, "To steal from one person is better than stealing all Muslims!"

ʻAqīl did not have any further excuse to make; he therefore asked the Imam's permission to go to Muʿāwiyah. The Imam (ʿa) permitted him.

ʿAqīl thus left al-Kūfah and headed for Muʿāwiyah who, without delay, asked him, "How were ʿAlī and his companions when you left them?"

In the logic of truth and honesty, ʿAqīl answered, "They are as same as Muḥammad's companions except that I cannot see the Messenger of Allah in person amongst them. You and your companions are as same as Abū-Sufyān's companions except that I cannot see Abū-Sufyān in person amongst you."[1]

In fact, Abū-Sufyān was among them and even more! That was Abū-Sufyān's son Muʿāwiyah, "*the Khosrow* (i.e. king) *of the Arabs*."

The Imam is Just Like the Feeble People

According to the philosophy of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), a ruler must imitate the most feeble people of his subjects in food, dress, and house. He (ʿa) is thus reported to have said,

> Verily, as Allah the All-exalted has made me the leader of His creatures, He imposed upon me constriction in my personal affairs, my food, my drink, and my dress just like the feeble people, so that the poor will pattern after my poverty and the rich will not be made despotic due to his richness.[2]

In the same connection, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) is reported to have said,

> Certainly, Allah the Sublime has made it obligatory on true leaders that they should maintain themselves at the level of low people so that the poor do not cry over their poverty.[3]

Cancellation of all Privileges

During his reign, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) cancelled all the privileges that people used to do for their rulers and chiefs.

When he (ʿa), marching at the head of his army towards Syria, reached al-Anbār, the landlords of the place came out to meet him in zeal of their love, faithfulness, and respect. No sooner had they seen Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) than that they got down from their horses and started running in front of him. They also presented him some of their riding animals as a sign of honor. Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) asked the reason for their strange actions. They replied that it was their custom to show their love and respect to their chiefs. They also said that these riding animals were their gifts to him

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[1] Ibn al-Athīr, *Usd al-Ghābah fī Tamyīz al-Ṣaḥābah* 4:425.

[2] Shaykh al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī* 1:410.

[3] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon No. 209.

and that they had prepared food for his army and him. He thus replied,

> By Allah (I swear this), by your action you do no good whatsoever to your rulers but you tire yourselves and put yourselves in toils in this world and in trouble in the next. How unfortunate that exertion, which brings harm here and in the Hereafter, is! How useful that ease which keeps you in comfort in this world and away from the Hell in the next is![1]

According to another narration, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) said to them reproachfully,

> As for this action of you, which you claim that you honor your leaders through it, it will never make any benefit to the leaders. It only brings fatigue to yourselves and your bodies. Never do such a thing again. As for your riding animals, if you wish, we can take them from you and reduce them from the tributes you are required to pay; otherwise, we will not take them. As for the food you are preparing for us, we dislike taking any amount of your properties unless we pay its price.[2]

This is the absolute justice that Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) represented in his behavior and conduct and through which he has exposed those who are fond of rule and authority.

In the view of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), a ruler is no more than a caretaker whose responsibility is to drive people to decency, supply them with their needs, reform their affairs, and guide them to the most straight path.

Method of Conversing with the Imam

In one of his speeches to his companions, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), teaching them how to speak with him, said,

> Do not address me in the manner despots are addressed. Do not evade me as the people of passion are (to be) evaded, do not meet me with flattery and do not think that I shall take it ill if a true thing is said to me, because the person who feels disgusted when truth is said to him or a just matter is placed before him would find it more difficult to act upon them. Therefore, do not abstain from saying a truth or pointing out a matter of justice because I

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[1] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Saying No. 36.

[2] Ibn Muzāḥim al-Minqarī, *Waqʿat Ṣiffīn*, pp. 161.

> do not regard myself above erring. I do not escape erring in my actions but that Allah helps me (in avoiding errors) in matters in which He is more powerful than I. Certainly, I and you are slaves owned by Allah, other than Whom there is no Lord except Him. He owns our selves, which we do not own. He took us from where we were towards what means prosperity to us. He altered our straying into guidance and gave us intelligence after blindness.(1)

These words overflow with the most supreme pictures of justice and virtue. The following are examples of the teachings mentioned in these words of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa):

1. The Imam (ʿa) instructed people not to project great titles and stately descriptions on the ruler, since such words are said to the tyrants and the adorers of rule and authority.

2. The Imam (ʿa) instructed that people should not associate with their rulers by means of flattery and courtesy; rather, they should speak frankly and provide advices to the rulers, because flattery is a sort of social hypocrisy.

3. The Imam (ʿa) confirmed that people should not believe that their leaders hate listening to the truth and complying with justice.

4. The Imam (ʿa) directed people to convey to their rulers only the issues that achieve public interest.

5. The Imam (ʿa) encouraged people to pronounce loudly the truth and to face the ruling authorities in order to force them to carry out their duties and responsibilities completely.

These are a few, yet important, points inferred from the previous speech of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), the pioneer of human thought and the founder of the human rights.

Let us now discuss the Holy Prophet's nomination of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) to succeed him in the leadership of the Muslim community. In fact, this is the most important topic with regard to the subject of caliphate (i.e. succession to the Holy Prophet).

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(1) *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon No. 215.

THE HOLY PROPHET SELECTS IMAM 'ALĪ FOR CALIPHATE

Most certainly and without any doubt, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) selected Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) to succeed him in ruling over the Muslim community. This fact is not subjected to any emotion or any sectarian inclination. Any conflicting idea is as worthless as dust. This is the very truth that falsehood can approach neither from the front nor from the rear. It is as bright as sunlight.

Let us now present some points of evidence demonstrating the fact that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) appointed Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) as the commander-in-chief of the progress of his community and assigned him as the guide of people:

First: It goes without saying that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) cared very much for his community. Confirming this fact, the Holy Qur'ān reads,

> There has come to you a messenger, (one) of yourselves, to whom aught that you are overburdened is grievous, full of concern for you, for the believers full of pity, merciful. (9/128)

He (ṣ) had suffered indescribable ordeals in the cause of guiding his people to the true guidance and saving them from the woes of tumults and calamities. He had also entered the most violent and aggressive wars for the purpose of establishing the laws of Almighty Allah on this globe. Is it then logic that he should leave his community sinking under the depths of chaos or allow such vicious people like the Umayyad and ʿAbbāsid dynasties—who went too far in persecuting the Muslims and forcing them to do what they did not want to do—to jump to the seat of his leadership?

Second: True Islam, that was conveyed to us by the Holy Prophet (ṣ), is in its reality a set of regulations and laws that must be put into effect at the hands of a just, aware, and well-versed leader except whom none can carry out this mission after the departure of the Holy Prophet (ṣ). Is it then logic that the Holy Prophet (ṣ), after all these laborious efforts, would leave this religion without appointing a well-qualified person who should have full acquaintance with these laws and regulations and should undertake the mission of supervising their applications to the actual life?

Third: From its first spark, Islam had faced vehement enemies; namely the Jews and the hypocrites, who always waited the befalling of

calamities to it and did not stop hatching conspiracies in the darkest hours of night and in the brightest hours of daylight. Is it then logic that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) would leave his community without deciding on a leader who would defend Muslims against the evils of these enemies and deter them for plotting more evil schemes against Islam?

In the first pages of this book, I have referred to the evils of the enemies of Islam and their inextinguishable rancor against Muslims. These enemies used to flare up seditious matters as an attempt to snatch the unity of Muslims and to eradicate their government and authority.

Fourth: The majority of those who embraced Islam could not understand or appreciate the Islamic values, since they had spent the major spans of their lives worshipping idols and statues. In fact, the majority of them embraced Islam for personal goals, such as their greed for bettering their livings or their fear from the sway of Islam. As a result, the principles and values of Islam could not find any space in the inner selves of these people and could not settle down in their minds. For that reason, when the Holy Prophet (ṣ) departed from this life, many of them abandoned their faiths—a fact that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had already concluded.[1]

Is it then logic that the Holy Prophet (ṣ), having expected this fact, would leave the Muslim community without nominating a wise leader who would be capable of defending the religion from the coming sweeping seditions?

Fifth: The laws of Islam are full of ramous issues like penal provisions, reprehensive bylaws, devotional rules, transactional statutes, contracts, one-side enforcements, general and special laws, categorical and restricted edicts, and repealed and repealing questions. The details of all these ramous issues require the existence of a knowledgeable person who has full familiarity with their primary and secondary aspects. Is it then

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[1] Highlighting this fact, the Holy Qur'ān predicted that the majority of Muslims would abandon their faith as soon as the Holy Prophet (ṣ) would die or be killed. Hence, it reads:

"And Muhammad is no more than a messenger; the messengers have already passed away before him. If then he dies or is killed, will you turn back upon your heels? And whoever turns back upon his heels, he will by no means do harm to Allah in the least. And Allah will reward the grateful. (3/144)"

logic that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) would not refer to the most qualified person who can understand the texts of the laws and realize their rules and fundaments?

Needless to say, none of the Holy Prophet's Companions and family members was more knowledgeable than Imam ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib (ʿa) with these questions. Testifying to this fact, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had declared more than once that ʿAlī was the most experienced of all of people in the field of judicature.[1]

ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb very often professed this fact, saying, "Without ʿAlī, ʿUmar would have perished."[2]

"May Allah take my soul before I face a problem while Abu'l-Ḥasan (Imam ʿAlī) is not present."[3]

"May Allah never keep me to face a problem while Abu'l-Ḥasan is not there to solve it.[4]

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[1] Al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 3:345, Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *al-Istīʿāb* 3:38; Ibn ʻAsākir, *Tārīkh*; *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal* 5:113 H. 21123; Ibn Abī-Shaybah: *al-Muṣannaf* 6:138; Ibn Taymiyah: *Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā* 16:482.

[2] Al-Amīnī, *al-Ghadīr* 6:101, 105-6 as quoted from al-Kinjī, *al-Kifāyah* 96; *Fayḍ al-Qadīr* 4:357; Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr: *al-Istīʿāb* 3:1103; *Fatḥ al-Malik al-ʿAliy* 71; *Ta'wīl Mukhtalaf al-Ḥadīth* 1:126.

[3] Al-Amīnī, *al-Ghadīr* 6:106 as quoted from al-Shabalnajī, *Nūr al-Abṣār* 79 with a little difference from the text mentioned in al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī's *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 1:628 H. 1683; Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Ṭabarī: *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah* 3-4:166; Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd: *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 1:18; *Subul al-Salām* 2:206.

[4] This saying of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb has been so famous because it was repeated on various occasions and in different forms such as the following:

"May Allah never keep me alive to face a problem while Abū'l-Ḥasan is not there to solve it."

"O Allah: please do not keep me alive to face a problem while Abū'l-Ḥasan is not there to solve it."

"I seek Allah's protection against my facing a problem while Abū'l-Ḥasan is not there to solve it."

"May I never live to face a problem while Abū'l-Ḥasan is not there to solve it."

"May Allah never keep me alive after you."

"I pray to Allah to protect me against any problem while ʿAlī is absent."

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All scholars of Muslim Jurisprudence (i.e. *fiqh*), the old and the modern, have derived their knowledge from Imam ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib.

Sixth: Personally, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) took upon himself the mission of educating Imam ʿAlī (ʿa). He thus fed him with his talents and geniuses. In this field, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) very often declared,

> I am the city of knowledge and ʿAlī is its gate; so, he who aspires to enter the city must come to it from its gate.(1)

When Imam ʿAlī's father, Abū-Ṭālib, had to encounter a financial crisis, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) took Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), who was still child, under his custody. Thus, the Holy Prophet's custody did not depart from Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) even for a single moment in his childhood.

Besides, there are numerous similar statements of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb to Imām ʿAlī (ʿa). ***See*** *Dalā'il al-Imāmah* by al-Ṭabarī (died in the early fourth century of Hijrah), pp. 22; *Sharḥ al-Akhbār* by al-Qāḍī al-Nuʿmān al-Maghribī (died in AH 363), 2:317, H.651, pp.565, H.651; *Kitāb al-Irshād* by Shaykh al-Mufīd (died in AH 413), 1:204; *Manāqib Āl Abī-Ṭālib* by Ibn Shahr Āshūb (died in AH 588), 1:311, 2:182; *al-ʿUmdah* by Ibn al-Biṭrīq al-Asadī al-Ḥillī (died in app. AH 600), pp. 257; *Wasā'il al-Shīʿah* by al-Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī (died in AH 1104), 28:108, H.34333, Section: *thubūt al-zinā bi'l-iqrār arbaʿa marrāt* (Provability Of Fornication By Four-Time Self-Confession), No. 7; *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā* by Ibn Saʿd (died in AH 230), 2:239; *al-Manāqib* by al-Khawārizmī (died in AH 568), pp. 96-97, H.97, 98; *Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq* by Ibn ʿAsākir (died in AH 571), 25:369, 42:406; *Usd al-Ghābah* by Ibn al-Athīr (died in AH 630), 4:23; *Dhakhā'ir al-ʿUqbā fī Manāqib Dhawi'l-Qurbā* by Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Ṭabarī (died in AH 694), pp. 82; *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl* by al-Mazzī (died in AH 742), 20:485; *Nuẓum Durar al-Simṭayn* by al-Zarandī al-Ḥanafī (died in AH 750), pp. 131-132; *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah* by Ibn Kathīr al-Dimashqī (died in AH 774), 7:397; *al-Iṣābah fī Tamyīz al-Ṣaḥābah* by Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (died in AH 852), 4:467, No. 5704: Biography of ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib; *Fatḥ al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* by Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (died in AH 852), 13:286; *Yanābīʿ al-Mawaddah li-Dhawi'l-Qurbā* by al-Qanadūzī al-Ḥanafī (died in AH 1294), 1:227; H.57, 58; *Fayḍ al-Qadīr Sharḥ al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaghīr* by al-Mannāwī (died in AH 1331), 4:470, H.5594.

For more information, the reader may refer to the book of *al-Imām ʿAlī fī Ārā' al-Khulafā'* (Imām ʿAlī in the Views of the Caliphs) by Mahdī Faqīh Īmānī (contemporary), pp. 93 and on. The author of this book has referred to tens of reference books and ways of narrations in this respect. [*Translator*: Quoted from *The Faith of the Shīʿah Imamiyyah* (the translation of *ʿAqā'id al-Shīʿah al-Imāmiyyah* by Muḥammad Riḍā al-Muzaffar); translated by Badr Shahin; published by the Ahl al-Bayt World Assembly, pp. 329-331]

(1) Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* 2:377.

It is also worth mentioning that the virtuous lady Fāṭimah bint (i.e. the daughter of) Asad, Imam ʿAlī's mother, took the Holy Prophet (ṣ) under her custody after the demise of his pure mother Āminah bint Wahab. Since then, Lady Fāṭimah bint Asad used to pray to Almighty Allah to give her a child to be a brother for the Holy Prophet (ṣ). Responding to her prayers, Almighty Allah granted her Imam ʿAlī who acted as the best brother of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), who, in turn, showed the Imam (ʿa) the highest kinds of compassion and affection.

Throughout the Holy Prophet's blessed lifetime, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) did not depart from him. He used to accompany him in his journeys and his own house. Thus, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) always followed the example of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and imitated his way of conduct and behavior. As a result, the Imam (ʿa) was a copy of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) in moral constitution and tendencies. Is it then strange if the Holy Prophet (ṣ) would appoint Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) to succeed him to the religious and civil leadership of the Muslim community?

To come to the point, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) is the self of the Holy Prophet (ṣ). This fact can be effortlessly seen in the holy Qur'ānic verse of *Mubāhalah* (the mutual imprecation of God's curse upon the lying party). How is it then acceptable to claim that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) should traverse him and assign another person as his successor? How should the Holy Prophet (ṣ) neglect nominating a person for the position of religious and civil leadership after him, leaving his people encounter chaos and surge against one another in irresistible waves of seditions and deviations?

Seventh: It is in fact redundant to provide such points of evidence to prove Imam ʿAlī's high status and priority to succeed the Holy Prophet (ṣ) in the religious and civil leadership of the Muslim community, while we have the Book of God, at which falsehood can come neither before nor behind it, bringing into the most brilliant view the status of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and his undeniable stature in Islam. Hence, we must never allow anything to replace the Holy Qur'ān.

Let us now refer a little number of holy Qur'ānic verses that commend Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), the father of Islamic justice:

IMAM *ʿALĪ* IN THE HOLY QUR'ĀN

In many verses, the Holy Qur'ān praised Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) for his extraordinary situations and demonstrated him as the most eminent personality after the Holy Prophet (ṣ). Many sources of the exegesis of the Holy Qur'ān (i.e. *tafsīr*) have counted three hundred verses to have been revealed in praise of Imam ʿAlī for his faith and virtue.[1] In fact, this number has never been mentioned for any of the companions of the Holy Prophet and the personalities of Islam. Let us now refer to some holy Qur'ānic verses that have been revealed to show Imam ʿAlī's preference, great standing, and eminent personality:

VERSE OF MUBĀHALAH

The Holy Qur'ān reads,

> But whoever disputes with you in this matter after what has come to you of knowledge, then say: Come let us call our sons and your sons and our women and your women and our near people and your near people, then let us be earnest in prayer, and pray for the curse of Allah on the liars. (3/61)

This holy Qur'ānic verse was revealed with regard to a very important event that took place between the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and a delegation from the Christians of Najrān who had come to al-Madīnah to debate the Holy Prophet (ṣ) about the authenticity of Islam. After a long debate, the two parties agreed to resort to the method of mutual imprecation of God's immediate curse, chastisement, and punishment upon the lying party. Each party agreed that a group of people would participate in this mutual imprecation.

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) thus brought his family (the Ahl al-Bayt); namely:

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[1] Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* 6:221; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Ṣawāʿiq al-Muḥriqah*, pp. 76; al-Shabalnajī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, pp. 76.

1. His two grandsons (Imam al-Ḥasan and Imam al-Ḥusayn) the chiefs of the youths of Paradise.[1] In the holy Qur'ānic verse involved, they are expressed as 'our sons'.

2. His holy daughter (Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā') the doyenne of the women of Paradise,[2] whose pleasure is part of Almighty Allah's pleasure and wrath is part of His wrath.[3] In the holy Qur'ānic verse involved, she is expressed as 'our women'.

3. Imam ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib, the Holy Prophet's brother and the door to his knowledge. In the holy Qur'ānic verse involved, he is expressed as 'our selves'.[4]

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[1] Unquestionably, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) is reported to have said, "Al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are the two chiefs of the youths of Paradise." See: Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad Aḥmad* 3:3; Muḥammad ibn Yazīd al-Qazwīnī, *Sunan Ibn Mājah* 1:44; al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī* 5:321; al-Nassā'ī, *Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah*, pp. 20; al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 3:167; al-Haythamī, *Majmaʿ al-Zawā'id* 9:165; Ibn Abī-Shaybah al-Kūfī, *al-Muṣannaf* 7:512; al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 11;573. [*Translator*]

[2] Al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, in *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 3:156, has recorded the following Prophetic tradition:

Zakariyyā ibn Abī-Zā'id has reported on the authority of Firās on the authority of al-Shiʿbī on the authority of Masrūq on the authority of ʿĀ'ishah who said:

In his final ailment, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said to his daughter Fāṭimah, "O Fāṭimah! Are you not pleased that you are the doyenne of the women of the worlds, the doyenne of the women of this community, and the doyenne of the faithful believing women?"

Commenting on this tradition, al-Ḥākim adds, "This chain of authority is authentic although the two (i.e. al-Bukhārī and Muslim) had not mentioned it in this very way."

This Prophetic traditions has been also mentioned by Sulaymān ibn Dāwūd al-Ṭayālisī in *Musnad Abī-Dāwūd*, pp. 197, al-Nassā'ī, *al-Sunan al-Kubrā* 4:252, al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 12: 110, H. 34232. [*Translator*]

[3] Narrators of the Prophetic traditions have reported the Holy Prophet (ṣ) as saying to his daughter Fāṭimah (ʿa), "Verily, Allah is pleased when you are pleased and is angered when you are angered." Al-Haythamī, *Majmaʿ al-Zawā'id* 9:203; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣābah fī Tamyīz al-Ṣaḥābah* 8:265; al-Qanadūzī, *Yanābīʿ al-Mawaddah* 2:58. [*Translator*]

[4] Let us quote the incident of Mubāhalah as reported by al-Muwaffaq al-

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Khawrizmī in his famous book entitled *al-Manāqib*, page 159:

(‘Abdullāh) ibn ‘Abbās, al-Ḥasan, al-Shi‘bī, and al-Siddī—all have reported this event, which is known as *Mubāhalah*, as follows:

As the delegation of the Christians of Najrān attended before the Holy Prophet (ṣ), the archbishop advanced and asked, “O Abu’l-Qāsim (the Prophet’s nickname), who was the father of (Prophet) Moses?”

“It was ‘Imrān,” answered the Prophet (ṣ).

The archbishop then asked, “Who was the father of (Prophet) Joseph?”

The Prophet (ṣ) answered, “It was (Prophet) Jacob?”

The archbishop then asked, “Who was your father?”

The Prophet (ṣ) answered, “I am the son of ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abd-al-Muṭṭalib.”

The archbishop then asked, “What about (Prophet) Jesus? Who was his father?”

The Prophet (ṣ) kept silent, waiting for the Divine Revelation. Immediately, Archangel Gabriel descended with God’s saying (The Holy Qur‘ān, Sūrah Āl-‘Imrān 3:59-60):

> Surely, the likeness of Jesus is with Allah as the likeness of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him, Be, and he was. (This is) the truth from your Lord, so be not of the disputers.

The archbishop commented, “What was revealed to us does not involve such information.”

Hence, Archangel Gabriel revealed to the Prophet (ṣ) God’s saying (The Holy Qur‘ān, Sūrah of Āl-‘Imrān 3:61):

> If any one disputes in this matter with thee, now after full knowledge has come to you, say: "Come! Let us gather together our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves. Then, let us earnestly pray and invoke the curse of Allah on those who lie!"

The archbishop commented, “This is truly fair. When shall we meet to invoke God’s curse on the lying party?”

The Prophet (ṣ) answered, “Let it be tomorrow, God willing.”

The Christian delegation then left. They advised each other, “If he will accompany some of his companions for the meeting tomorrow, then you must compete with him, for, in such case, his claim is false. But if he will accompany some members of his family, then do not compete with him, for, in such case, he is truly a prophet, and if he will invoke God’s curse upon us, we will certainly be perished.”

Some of them however declared, “We do know that he is the very prophet we are expecting, and if he invokes God’s curse on us, we will surely be perished and will never go back to our families or fortunes.”

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According to this holy Qur'ānic verse, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) is the self of the Holy Prophet (ṣ). Just as the Holy Prophet (ṣ) is the best of all the past and last human generations, so must Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) be the best of all these generations after him. Similarly, just as it is impossible for anyone to occupy the position of leadership in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), so also is it unacceptable for anyone to occupy this position after the departure of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) except Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), because he is the self of the Holy Prophet and the best of all of the beings after him. It is therefore out of the ordinary that succession to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) was held by other persons than the Imam (ʿa), except whom nobody gained the status of his being the Holy Prophet's self.

VERSE OF THE WARNER AND THE GUIDE

The Holy Qur'ān says,

> You are only a warner and there is a guide for every people. (13/7)

Al-Ṭabarī reports Ibn ʻAbbās to have said,

The other Jews and Christians asked, "What should we do, then?"

Abu'l-Ḥarth, the bishop, suggested, "Since he is a generous man, we may visit him and ask him to accept our withdrawal for this competition of invocating God's curse on the lying party."

The next morning, the Prophet (ṣ) invited all the people of al-Madīnah and the neighboring villages to attend that meeting, and everybody responded.

The Prophet (ṣ) went out, ʻAlī was behind him, al-Ḥasan to his right (and he was catching his arm), al-Ḥusayn to his left, and Fāṭimah behind them. He then said, "Let us begin. These (al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn) are our sons, ʻAlī and I ourselves, and this (Fāṭimah) our women."

As they saw this situation, the other party attempted to hide themselves behind any column they could find or behind each other, because they anticipated that the Prophet (ṣ) would begin invoking God's curse on them.

They therefore moved towards him, knelt down before him, and besought, "Please, accept our withdrawal from this matter."

The Prophet (ṣ) accepted their withdrawal after they had accepted his conditions.

See also these reference books of Prophetic traditions: Jalāl-al-Dīn al-Suyūṭi: *al-Durr al-Manthūr*; Ibn al-Maghāzilī: *al-Manāqib*; Muḥammad ibn ʻAlī al-Ṭabarī: *Bishārat al-Muṣṭafā*; Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah wal-Nihāyah*, al-Ya'qūbī: *al-Tārīkh*; Ibn Shabbah al-Numayrī: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah*.

When this holy Qur'ānic verse was revealed, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) put his hand on ʿAlī's chest and said, "I am the warner and ʿAlī is the guide." Pointing to ʿAlī's shoulder, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) further said, "You are the true guide. Through you only will those who are guided to the right path be led to it."[1]

VERSE OF THE RETAINING EAR

The Holy Qur'ān says,

> ...And that the retaining ear might retain it. (69/12)

About the exegesis of this holy Qur'ānic verse, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) is reported to have said,

> The Messenger of Allah (ṣ) said to me, "I have asked my Lord to make this ear to be yours, ʿAlī." Since that day, I have never forgotten any thing I heard from the Messenger of Allah.[2]

VERSE OF THE PEOPLE OF THE REMINDER

The Holy Qur'ān says,

> Ask the followers of the Reminder if you do not know. (16/43)

Through his chain of authority, al-Ṭabarī has reported Jābir al-Ju'fī as saying that when this holy verse was revealed, (Imam) ʿAlī said:

> We are the followers of the Reminder.[3]

VERSE OF THE GUARDIAN

The Holy Qur'ān says,

> Only Allah is your guardian and His Messenger and those who believe; those who keep up prayers and give alms while they bow. (5/55)

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[1] *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī* 13:72; *Tafsīr al-Rāzī* (with little difference); al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-'Ummāl* 6:157; al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 3:129.

[2] Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-'Ummāl* 6:108; al-Wāḥidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, pp. 329; *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī* 29:35; al-Zamakhsharī, *Tafsīr al-Kashshāf* 4:600; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-Manthūr* 8:267.

[3] *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī* 8:145.

This holy Qur'ānic verse restricts the general guardianship over Muslims to Almighty Allah, His Prophet (ṣ), and Imam ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib (ʿa). Expressing Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), the holy verse uses the plural form, not the singular, as a sign of the great personality of him and a sign of honoring his status.

In the holy verse too, the sentence comes in the nominal clause (according to the Arabic language) along with the (Arabic) restriction particle: *innamā* (which means: only). This restriction denotes emphasis and confirmation. Accordingly, Almighty Allah has emphasized on and confirmed the guardianship of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), which means that he is the only one to whom loyalty must be shown.

VERSE OF THE FOREMOST

The Holy Qur'ān says,

> And the foremost are the foremost. These are they who are drawn nigh (to Allah). (56/10-11)

The majority of scholars have reported Ibn ʻAbbās as saying that the foremost of this nation is ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib.[1]

VERSE OF SELLING SOULS WITH ALLAH'S PLEASURE

The Holy Qur'ān says,

> Among men is he who sells himself to seek the pleasure of Allah; and Allah is Affectionate to the servants. (2/207)

This holy Qur'ānic verse was revealed to express the event of Imam ʿAlī's replacing the Holy Prophet (ʿa) in his bed so as to give the Holy Prophet the opportunity to flee to Yathrib (al-Madīnah) after the polytheists of Makkah had plotted to assassinate him when he would be sleeping in his bed. Hence, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) left the city and Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) accepted to spend that night in the Prophet's bed so that the assassinators would believe that the Holy Prophet was still there.[2]

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[1] Muḥammad Ḥasan al-Muẓaffar, *Dalā'il al-Ṣidq* 2:102.

[2] Al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 3:4.

VERSE OF LOVE FOR THE NEAR RELATIVES

The Holy Qur'ān says,

> Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives. And whoever earns good, We give him more of good therein. Surely, Allah is Forgiving, Grateful. (42/23)

The majority of exegetes of the Holy Qur'ān and narrators of the Prophetic traditions have decided that the 'near relatives' the love for whom has been decided by Almighty Allah as duty that is obligatory upon His servants are namely Imam ʿAlī, Lady Fāṭimah, Imam al-Ḥasan, and Imam al-Ḥusayn, peace be upon them all. Likewise, they have decided that to earn good that is mentioned in this holy verse stands for love for and loyalty to them.

In this respect, Ibn 'Abbās has reported that when the holy verse involved was revealed, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) was asked, "Who are your near relatives the love for whom has been made obligatory upon us?" The Holy Prophet (ṣ) answered,

> They are ʿAlī, Fāṭimah, and their two sons.[1]

Advancing an argument against his rivals, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), on one occasion, has said,

> In Sūrah Ḥā-Mīm, there is a verse that was revealed to express our manner. This verse is: "Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives. And whoever earns good, We give him more of good therein. Surely, Allah is Forgiving, Grateful. (42/23)"

Jābir ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Anṣārī, the prominent companion of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), reported that a Bedouin, once, came to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and asked him to mention the pillars of Islam before him.

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

> Islam is that you should profess that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is His servant and messenger.

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[1] Nūr al-Dīn al-Haythamī, *Majma' al-Zawā'id wa Manba' al-Fawā'id* 7:103; Aḥmad ibn 'Abdullāh al-Ṭabarī, *Dhakhā'ir al-'Uqbā fī Manāqib Dhawi'l-Qurbā*, pp. 25; al-Shabalnajī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, pp. 101; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-Manthūr* 7:348.

The Bedouin asked, "Will you take from me a wage for this?"

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

The only wage for this is your love for the near relatives.

The Bedouin asked, "Do you mean my or your near relatives?"

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) replied,

I mean my near relatives.

Immediately, the Bedouin expressed his acceptance and said, "Give me you hand so that I will pay homage to you on these. Curse of Allah be upon him who does not love you and does not love your near relatives."

Instantaneously, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) confirmed the imprecation of the Bedouin by saying,

O Allah, please respond (i.e. Amen).[1]

Al-Kumayt, the poet of Islam, has composed this poetic verse about the holy Qur'ānic verse involved:

We have found in Sūrah Ḥā-Mīm[2] a verse in your favor, which all pious and impious people have interpreted to be in praise of you.

Likewise, Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfiʿī, the founder of the Shāfiʿīyyah School of Law, composed this fantastic poetic verse:

O Household of Allah's Messenger! Verily, love for you is a Divine duty that Allah has revealed in the Qur'ān.

It is sufficient pride for you that whoever disdains mentioning you in the prayers, his prayers are worthlessly unacceptable.[3]

Indeed, to love Imam ʿAlī and his household (a) is regarded as the payment of the Holy Prophet's wage for the harsh sufferings he had encountered in the way of saving humankind from the murk of polytheism.

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[1] Al-Haythamī, *Majmaʿ al-Zawā'id* 7:103; Aḥmad ibn 'Abdullāh al-Ṭabarī, *Dhakhā'ir al-'Uqbā fi Manāqib Dhawi'l-Qurbā*, pp. 25; Abū-Na'īm, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā'* 3:102.

[2] Ḥā-Mīm is Sūrah (Qur'ānic Chapter) Fuṣṣilat (No. 42) in which the holy verse involved comes.

[3] Al-Shablanjī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, pp. 104.

In this connection, Ibn al-ʿArabī, a famous theologian and Gnostic, has composed these poetic verses:

I understand that my loyalty to the household of Ṭāhā is an obligation that draws me nearer to them although some people will despise it.

The missioned Prophet did not ask for any wage for his conveyance of the true guidance except love for his near relatives.[1]

VERSE OF PURIFICATION

The Holy Qur'ān says,

> Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House, and to purify you a thorough purifying. (33/33)

Exegetes of the Holy Qur'ān and narrators of the Prophetic traditions have unanimously stated that this holy verse was revealed concerning the five individuals of the cloak; namely, the Holy Prophet, Imam ʿAlī, Lady Fāṭimah, Imam al-Ḥasan, and Imam al-Ḥusayn, peace be upon them all.

It is authentically reported that Ummu-Salamah, the veracious wife of the Holy Prophet, stated that this holy Qur'ānic verse was revealed in her house where there were Lady Fāṭimah, Imam al-Ḥasan, Imam al-Ḥusayn, and Imam ʿAlī in addition to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) who covered them all under his cloak and said this prayer:

> O Allah, these are my household. So, please remove uncleanness from them and purify them with thorough purification.

Ummu-Salamah, who tried to be with them under that cloak, asked, "O Allah's Messenger! Can I join you?" The Holy Prophet (ṣ) pulled the cloak and said, "You are on the right."[2]

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās is reported to have said: For seven months, I witnessed the Holy Prophet (ṣ) coming to the door of ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib's house five times every day at the times of the ritual prayers to repeat these words:

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[1] Al-Haythamī, *Majmaʿ al-Zawā'id* 9:172; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Ṣawāʿiq al-Muḥriqah*, pp. 173; Muḥammad al-Ṣabbān, *Isʿāf al-Rāghibīn*, pp. 111.

[2] Al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 2:416; Ibn al-Athīr, *Usd al-Ghābah fī Maʿrifat al-Ṣaḥābah* 5:521.

> Peace and Allah's mercy and blessings be upon you, O the People of the House. Verily, "Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House, and to purify you a thorough purifying." Come to the prayer! May Allah show you all mercy![1]

This holy Qur'ānic verse clearly indicates the infallibility of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and his family members. According to Arab rhetoricians, the addition of the article *li* to the predicate of the statement, the repetition of the root *ṭ-h-r* (purity), and starting the sentence with the restriction article *innamā*—all these factors have come to stress the restriction intended in the holy verse and to highlight the removal of all filthy things, including sins, from these persons, which is the very sense of infallibility (i.e. *ʿiṣmah*) that is believed by the Shīʿah.

These have been some holy Qur'ānic verses that bear clear-cut proofs on Imam ʿAlī's superiority to all other Muslims and speak of his virtues and distinction of all others in faith, following of the true guidance, and behavior.[2]

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[1] Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-Manthūr* 5:199.

[2] In addition, there are many other holy Qur'ānic verses that imply the excellence, superiority, and virtues of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa):

(1) The Holy Qur'ān says,

> As for those who spend their property by night and by day, secretly and openly, they shall have their reward from their Lord and they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve. (2/274)

It is reported that Imam ʻAlī (ʿa) had four dirhams (silver units of currency). He spent one dirham at night, another at day, a third secretly, and the fourth openly. When the Holy Prophet (ṣ) asked him for a reason, Imam ʻAlī (ʿa) answered, "I want to actualize my Lord's promise to me." This holy Qur'ānic verse was thus revealed about this situation. (Ibn al-Athīr, *Usd al-Ghābah fī Maʻrifat al-Ṣaḥābah* 4:25; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Ṣawāʻiq al-Muḥriqah*, pp. 78; al-Wāḥidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, pp. 64.)

(2) The Holy Qur'ān says,

> As for those who believe and do good, surely they are the best of men. (98/7)

Ibn ʻAsākir reports Jābir ibn ʻAbdullāh to have said: We were sitting with the Holy Prophet (ṣ) when ʻAlī came. Upon seeing him, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

> I swear by Him Who grasps my soul, this one and his partisans (i.e.

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Shīʿah) shall be the winners on the Resurrection Day.

The holy Qur'ānic verse involved was then revealed for this cause. Hence, whenever ‘Alī would come, the Holy Prophet’s companions would say, “There comes the best of men.” (Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-Manthūr* 8:589; *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī* 30: 17; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Ṣawā‘iq al-Muḥriqah*, pp. 96.)

(3) The Holy Qur'ān says,

> O you who believe! Be careful of your duty to Allah and be with the true ones. (9/119)

Al-Suyūṭī says that Ibn Mardawayh has reported Ibn ‘Abbās as saying that the ‘true ones’ intended in this holy verse stands for ‘Alī ibn Abī-Ṭālib.

A similar narration is reported from Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir (ʿa). (Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-Manthūr* 4:316.)

(4) The Holy Qur'ān says,

> And he who brings the truth and he who accepts it as the truth-- these are the true pious. (39/33)

Ibn Mardawayh has reported Abū-Hurayrah as saying that the one who brings the truth is the Holy Prophet and the one who accepts it as true is ‘Alī ibn Abī-Ṭālib. (Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-Manthūr* 7:228.)

(5) The Holy Qur'ān says,

> This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favor on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion. (5/3)

This holy verse was revealed on the eighteenth of Dhu’l-Ḥijjah immediately after the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had declared publicly Imam ‘Alī as the next leader. (Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* 8:19; Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-Manthūr* 6:19.)

After the revelation of this verse, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

> Magnified be the Lord for the perfection of the religion, the completion of the favor, His satisfaction with my conveyance of the Mission, and for the (divinely commissioned) leadership of ‘Alī ibn Abī-Ṭālib. (Muḥammad Ḥasan al-Muẓaffar, *Dalā'il al-Ṣidq* 2:152.)

(6) The Holy Qur'ān says,

> He it is Who strengthened you with His help and with the believers. (8/62)

This holy verse was revealed to express one of Imam ‘Alī’s manners and to name him as ‘the believers.’ Al-Suyūṭī has reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Asākir that Abū-Hurayrah said, “On the Divine Throne, the following is written: ‘There is no god save Me, One and Only without having any partner with Me. Muḥammad is My servant and Messenger. I aid him with ‘Alī.’”

(7) The Holy Qur'ān says,

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> There surely came over man a period of time when he was a thing not worth mentioning... *Sūrah al-Insān*: 76.

All exegetes of the Holy Qur'ān and narrators of the Prophetic traditions have unanimously declared that this holy Qur'ānic chapter was revealed to express one of the manners of the Holy Prophet's Household. The following is an account of the event concerning which the holy chapter was revealed:

The Holy Prophet (ṣ), with some of his companions, visited al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn who were sick. They suggested that Imam 'Alī should vow a three-day fasting if they would recover their health. The Imam, as well as their mother Lady Fāṭimah and Fiḍḍah their bondwoman, participated in that vow. When al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn were healed, the group fasted. The Imam had no food at that time; therefore, he had to borrow three measures of barley from Simon the Jew. In the first day, Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) milled and baked one of these measures. In the very time of breaking the fast, a poor man knocked their door and said, "Peace be upon you, O family of Muḥammad. I am a poor Muslim. Serve me with food and God may serve you with food from Paradise." The Imam (a) gave him his share. The others did the same thing and they all passed that night without eating anything. On the second day of their fasting, an orphan complaining hunger knocked their door in the time of breaking the fast. They offered their shares and passed the second night without having anything except water. On the third day and in the very time of breaking the fast, a prisoner complaining hunger knocked their door asking for some food. They all offered him their shares before having had anything of it.

On the fourth day, Imam 'Alī (ʿa) took al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) while they were trembling because of hunger. "I am very touched for what I see," said the Holy Prophet (ṣ) who walked with them to their house. There, he saw Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) standing in her prayer-place while her belly was stuck to her back and her eyes were deep-set. He was affected by this scene. In the meantime, Archangel Gabriel descended and said, "O Muḥammad, enjoy it. Allah may please you with regard to your household." He then revealed *Sūrah al-Insān*. (Quoted from Sayyid Mahdī al-Ṣadr, *The Ahl al-Bayt; Ethical Role-Models*; translated into English by: Badr Shahin; published by Ansariyan Publications.)

(8) The Holy Qur'ān says,

> On the most elevated places, there shall be men who know all by their marks. (7/46)

Ibn ʿAbbās has reported that on these most elevated places (i.e. *aʿrāf*), al-ʿAbbās, Ḥamzah, ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib, and Ja'far the two-winged are standing. They will recognize their devotees by the whiteness of their faces and their enemies by the blackness of their faces. (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqah*, pp. 101.)

(9) The Holy Qur'ān says,

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At any rate, to provide proofs on the primacy of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) is in reality like providing proofs on the existence of daylight.

Referring to this meaning, a poet says,

Nothing in the mentalities will be proven true if daylight requires evidence.

> Of the believers are men who are true to the covenant, which they made with Allah; so, of them is he who accomplished his vow, of them is he who yet waits, and they have not changed in the leas. (33/23)

When he was asked about the explanation of this holy Qur'ānic verse, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) said, "O Allah, please forgive me. This verse was revealed concerning me, my uncle Ḥamzah, and my cousin ʻUbaydah ibn al-Ḥārith. As for ʻUbaydah, he was martyred in the Battle of Badr. As for Ḥamzah, he was martyred in the Battle of Uḥud. As for me, I am waiting for the most unfortunate man to dye my beard with the blood of my head." (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Ṣawāʻiq al-Muḥriqah*, pp. 80; al-Shabalnajī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, pp. 80.)

(10) The Holy Qur'ān says,

> What! Do you make one who undertakes the giving of drink to the pilgrims and the guarding of the Sacred Mosque like him who believes in Allah and the latter day and strives hard in Allah's way? They are not equal with Allah. And Allah does not guide the unjust people. (9/19)

Taking pride in his deed, Ṭalḥah ibn Shaybah said, "I am the custodian of the Sacred House. I have it keys in my hand and I am in charge of its curtains." Al-ʿAbbās said, "I am in charge of serving the pilgrims with water." As for Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), he said, "I do not understand what you are saying. I have performed prayers directing my face towards this House six months before everyone else did. I am the fighter for the sake of this religion." So, this holy Qur'ānic verse was revealed to prefer Imam ʿAlī over the others. (*Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī* 10:68; *Tafsīr al-Rāzī* 16:11; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-Manthūr* 4:146; al-Wāḥidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, pp. 182.)

(11) The Holy Qur'ān says,

> Is he then who is a believer like him who is a transgressor? They are not equal. (32/18)

One day, al-Walīd ibn ʻUqbah ibn Abī-Maʻīṭ boasted over Imam ʿAlī, saying, "I am more eloquent than you are, my sword is sharper than yours, and I am firmer in fighting than you are." Answering him, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) said, "Shut up! You are no more than a transgressor." Hence, this holy verse was revealed to compare between the two. (*Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī* 21:68; al-Wāḥidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, pp. 263; Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* 13:321; Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Ṭabarī, *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah fī Faḍā'il al-ʻAsharah* 2:206.)

Eighth: A swift look into the reference books of the Prophetic traditions demonstrates before our eyes the large scope of the Holy Prophet's great concern about Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) as well as the emphatic way the Prophet (ṣ) used to prefer Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) to all others and to present him as the most pious and the best in everything.

Let us now refer to some Prophetic traditions with regard to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa):

IMAM *ʿALĪ* IN THE PROPHETIC TRADITIONS

IMAM ʿALĪ; THE HOLY PROPHET'S SELF

Al-Walīd ibn ʿUqbah, ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān's maternal half-brother, informed the Holy Prophet (ṣ) that the Banū-Wulayʿah had apostatized Islam. Angrily, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

> Let the Banū-Wulayʿah keep on doing so and I will subjugate them to a man who is like myself; that is ʿAlī, who will kill them and capture their offspring.

While saying so, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) stroke Imam ʿAlī's shoulder.[1]

ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ reported the following: When I came back to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) after the Dhāt al-Salāsil expedition, I thought that none would be more lovable to the Holy Prophet than I am. I therefore asked him, "O God's Messenger, who is the most beloved to you?" The Prophet (ṣ) mentioned a number of persons. I then asked, "What about ʿAlī?" The Holy Prophet (ṣ) answered,

> This man is asking me about my own self![2]

IMAM ʿALĪ; THE HOLY PROPHET'S BROTHER

Many reports from the Holy Prophet (ṣ) have confirmed his repetitive confirmations about his brotherhood with Imam ʿAlī (ʿa). The following are few examples:

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[1] Nūr al-Dīn al-Haythamī, *Majmaʿ al-Zawā'id wa Manbaʿ al-Fawā'id* 7:110.

However, al-Walīd ibn ʿUqbah lied in his informing against the apostasy of the Banū-Wulayʿah tribe. Therefore, this holy Qur'ānic verse was revealed: "O you who believe, if an evildoer comes to you with a report, look carefully into it, lest you harm a people in ignorance, then be sorry for what you have done. (49/6)"

[2] Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 6:400.

Al-Tirmidhī, through his chain of authority, has reported ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar as saying: When the Holy Prophet (ṣ) brought into fraternal association each couple of Muslims, one from the fresh emigrants and the other from the inhabitants of al-Madīnah, ʿAlī came to him with teary eyes and said, "O Allah's Messenger, you have fraternized your companions with one another and left me!" Answering him, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

> As for you, you are my brother in this world and the Next World.[1]

Anas ibn Mālik reported the following: One day, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) ascended the minbar to deliver a speech. Once he finished, he asked, "Where is ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib?" ʿAlī jumped and said, "Here I am, Allah's Messenger." Hence, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) embraced him, kissed him on the place between his eyes, and shouted,

> O Muslims, this is my brother, cousin, and son-in-law.[2] This is my flesh, blood, and hair. This is the father of my two grandsons—al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, the two chiefs of the youths of Paradise.[3]

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar has reported that he heard the Holy Prophet (ṣ), who was riding his she-camel in the Farewell Pilgrimage, saying,

> O Allah, please be the witness! O Allah, I have conveyed to them that this (one; i.e. ʿAlī) is my brother, cousin, son-in-law, and the father of my descendants. O Allah, please throw down into Hell any one who shows enmity towards him.[4]

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhī* 2:299; al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 3:14.

How great this brotherhood is whose roots extended from this world to the other world.

[2] Asmā' bint ʿUmays reported the following: I was present at the wedding night of Lady Fāṭimah and Imam ʿAlī. The next morning, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) came to the door of their house and said to me, "O Ummu-Ayman, call upon my brother." I said, "If he is your brother, how come that you have given him your daughter in marriage?" The Holy Prophet (ṣ) answered, "Yes, it is (He is truly my brother)." (Al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 3:210; al-Nasā'ī, *al-Khaṣā'iṣ*) [*Translator*]

[3] Aḥmad ibn ʻAbdullāh al-Ṭabarī, *Dhakhā'ir al-ʻUqbā fī Manāqib Dhawi'l-Qurbā*, pp. 92.

[4] Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 3:61.

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) is reported to have said,

> When I was raised to the Seventh Sky, (Archangel) Gabriel said to me, "Advance, Muḥammad! By God, none has ever gained this gift; neither an archangel nor a missioned prophet." Then, my Lord revealed to me something. When I returned, a caller from behind the Divine Screen said to me, "How excellent your father Abraham is and how excellent your brother ʿAlī is. I thus recommend you to treat him in a good way."[1]

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) is reported to have said,

> When the Resurrection Day comes, I will be called from the depth of the Throne with a call saying, "O Muḥammad! Excellent is your father Abraham and excellent is your brother ʿAlī."[2]

Abu'l-Ṭufayl ʿĀmir ibn Wā'ilah has reported the following: I was standing on the doorstep on that day of the *Shūrā* Committee when the members disputed with one another. Among the voices that were raised, I heard ʿAlī saying,

> The people swore allegiance to Abū-Bakr while, by God I swear it, I had a better right and I was worthier than he was in that matter (of the position of leadership). Nonetheless, I listened to him and obeyed lest the people will renounce their religious faith and fight against each other with swords. Then, the people swore allegiance to ʿUmar while, by God I swear it, I had a better right and I was worthier than he was in the matter. Nonetheless, I listened to him and obeyed lest the people will renounce their religious faith and fight against each other with swords. Now, you want me to listen to and obey you as you are determined to swear allegiance to ʿUthmān? ʿUmar has included me with five persons while neither he nor have they recognized my superiority over them in righteousness, considering all of us equal. By God I swear this: If I wanted, I would enumerate my virtues that neither the Arabs, nor the non-Arabs, nor the covenanters, nor the polytheists can ever refute even one of them.

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[1] Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 3:161.

[2] Ibid. 3:162.

The Imam (ʿa) then asked,

> I adjure you all! Is there any one among you who was the brother of God's Messenger save me?

They all answered, "No, by God."[1]

Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) is reported to have said,

> I am the true servant of Allah and the brother of His Messenger; and I am the greatest veracious one. No one will claim that he has this rank after me but a liar. I had performed prayers seven years before other people did.[2]

Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir (ʿa) has reported that when this holy verse was revealed "*...give to me an aide from my family: Aaron, my brother. Strengthen my back by him...*" the Holy Prophet (ṣ), who was on a mountain, prayed to His Lord, saying,

> O Allah, please strengthen my back by my brother ʿAlī.[3]

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[1] Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 5:725.

[2] Ibn Mājah, *al-Sunan* 1:12; al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿala al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 3:111; *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* 2:56.
This report conveys a very crucial issue; namely, the seizure of the position of caliphate (i.e. succession to the Holy Prophet in religious and political leadership) by Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar although they had known for sure that Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was more entitled and more deserving to hold this position than they were. In fact, these two persons are not known as prominent fighters for the sake of Almighty Allah and for protecting Islam during the Holy Prophet's lifetime. On the contrary of them, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was well-known for his extraordinary fighting and defense of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and Islam. He was the most famous fighter in such battles like the Battle of Badr, the Battle of Uḥud, and the Battle of the Allies. If truth be told, Islam could see light due to the efforts and struggle of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa). I say this word without any submission to my personal emotion or desire. A look into the history of Islam, despite of its distortions, proves indubitably that ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib (ʿa) was always the most outstanding figure in all of the affairs of Islam during the lifetime and after the departure of the Holy Prophet (ṣ).
In the tradition involved, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) presents the reason for not having led any armed uprising against Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar. To be exact, the reason was that he feared lest Muslims would abandon their faiths and return to the previous era of ignorance. For this reason only, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) obeyed and listened to the state of things as they were, although "*there was pricking in the eye and suffocation (of mortification) in the throat*", as Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) himself had expressed.

[3] Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 7:113; al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿala al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 3:21.

IMAM ʻALĪ; THE HOLY PROPHET'S AIDE

On many occasions, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) confirmed that Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was his aide.

Asmā' bint ʿUmays, the virtuous woman, has reported that she heard the Holy Prophet (ṣ), praying to God, saying,

> O Allah, I will say the same prayer my brother Moses had said to You: O Allah, please give to me an aide from my family; ʿAlī, my brother. Strengthen my back by him, and associate him with me in my affair; so that we should glorify You much and remember You oft. Surely, You are seeing us.[1]

Abū-Dharr al-Ghifārī, the prominent companion of the Holy Prophet, has reported the following:

One day, I followed the Messenger of Allah (ṣ) in a congregational Midday Prayer. When we finished, a beggar asked for something, but nobody gave him anything. He therefore raised his hands towards the sky and said, "O Allah, bear witness to me that I have begged in the mosque of the Messenger, but nobody gave me anything." Meanwhile, ʿAlī, who was in a state of genuflection in a prayer, pointed to a ring he was wearing in the little finger of his right hand. The beggar advanced towards ʿAlī and took the ring while the Holy Prophet (ṣ) was watching the scene. Upon this situation, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) supplicated the Lord, saying,

> O Allah, my brother Moses besought You, saying, 'O my Lord! Expand my breast for me, make my affair easy to me, loose the knot from my tongue that they may understand my word, and give to me an aide from my family: Aaron, my brother. Strengthen my back by him and associate him (with me) in my affair.' So, You responded to him, saying in a clear-cut verse of the Qur'ān: 'We will strengthen your arm with your brother and We will give you both an authority.' O Allah, as for me, Muḥammad, Your prophet and choicest one, I beseech You to expand my breast for me, make my affair easy to me, and give me an aide from my family: ʿAlī. Strengthen my back by him.

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[1] Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Ṭabarī, *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah fī Faḍā'il al-'Asharah* 2:163.

As soon as the Holy Prophet (ṣ) finished his prayer, Archangel Gabriel descended to him and said, "O Muḥammad, read this: *Only Allah is your Guardian*... etc.[1]

IMAM 'ALĪ; THE HOLY PROPHET'S VICEGERENT

Reporters of Prophetic traditions have uninterruptedly reported the Holy Prophet (ṣ) to have declared Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) as his vicegerent.

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) is thus reported to have said,

> This (i.e. ʿAlī) is my brother, vicegerent, and successor among you; therefore, listen to and obey him.[2]
>
> O ʿAlī, you are my successor concerning my leadership of this nation.[3]
>
> ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib is the foremost in accepting Islam, the most knowledgeable, and the leader and successor after me.[4]
>
> O people! Whose words are better than Allah's? Your Lord—Mighty is His Grace—has commanded me to assign ʿAlī over you as the most outstanding leader, as my own successor and executor of my will, and that you should regard him as my brother and vizier.[5]
>
> ʿAlī is part of me and I am part of him. May Allah fight him who fights ʿAlī. ʿAlī is the leader of the creatures after me.[6]
>
> Verily, Almighty Allah has revealed to me that He would choose a brother, a successor, a vicegerent, and an heir for me from among my community. When I asked about his identity, the Lord said, "He is the one whom I love and who loves me. He is namely ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib."[7]

On one occasion, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa),

> I should not leave before appointing you as my representative.[8]

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[1] *Tafsīr al-Rāzī* 12:26; al-Shabalnajī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, pp. 170; *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī* 6:186.
[2] *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* 2:127; *Tārīkh Ibn al-Athīr* 2:22; *Tārīkh Abi'ā'* 1:116; *Musnad Aḥmad* 1:331; *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 6:399.
[3] ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn, *al-Murājaʿāt*, pp. 208.
[4] *Ibid.* 209.
[5] *Ibid.*
[6] *Ibid.* 210.
[7] *Ibid.* 210.
[8] Al-Fayrūz'Ābādī, *Faḍā'il al-Khamsah min al-Ṣiḥāḥ al-Sittah* 2:21.

IMAM 'ALĪ'S POSITION TO THE HOLY PROPHET

Successively, the Prophetic traditions venerate Imam ʿAlī's stature and demonstrate the highness of his standing. Among these traditions is the one in which the Holy Prophet (ṣ) declared the position of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) to him to be the same as the position of Prophet Aaron to his brother Prophet Moses.

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) is reported to have said to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa),

> Does it not please you that your standing to me is the same as (Prophet) Aaron's standing to (Prophet) Moses except that there will not be any prophet to come after me?[1]

Jābir ibn ʿAbdullāh has reported that he heard the Holy Prophet (ṣ) saying to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa),

> Your position to me is as same as Prophet Aaron's position to Prophet Moses except that there shall not come any prophet after me.[2]

Saʿd ibn Abī-Waqqāṣ is reported as saying:

I heard the Messenger of Allah (ṣ) saying, "'Alī has three privileges…" Certainly, if I had had only one of these privileges, this would have been dearer to me than possessing this world and whatever therein. I heard him saying,

> You position to me is as same as the position of (Prophet) Aaron to (Prophet Moses) except that there shall be no prophet after me.

I also heard him saying,

> Tomorrow, I will give the standard to a man who loves Allah and His Messenger, and Allah and His Messenger love him. He will never be absconder.

I also heard him saying,

> Whoever has regarded me as his master, must now regard this (ʿAlī) as his master.[3]

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[1] Al-Haythamī, *Majma' al-Zawā'id* 9:111; Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimmah*, pp. 22.

[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhī* 2:31; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* 3:288; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad* 3:238.

[3] Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 6:405.

You, Saʿd, have heard these words from the Holy Prophet (ṣ) about Imam ʿAlī ibn

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This Prophetic tradition has been so circulating that its reporters are too numerous. The immortally honored martyr, Zayd ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn (ʿa), poetized the purport of this tradition as follows:

If one makes comparison among the peoples according to his own view, then ʿAlī *has been regarded as the most favorable on the strength of his virtues.*

Add to this the saying of Allah's Messenger, who always says nothing but the truth, although this will be in defiance of some noses of lying persons:

O ʿAlī*, to me, your position is as same as Aaron's to Moses; so, you are my true brother and companion.*

When he called him on the Battle of Badr, ʿAlī *responded to his call and went on fighting firmly for the sake of the Lord.*[1]

This tradition about ʿAlī's position to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) is easily understandable. The Holy Prophet (ṣ) granted Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) the position of Prophet Aaron to Prophet Moses. It is well known that Prophet Aaron was the aide and successor of Prophet Moses. Likewise, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was the aide and successor of Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ). Because of the importance of this Prophetic tradition, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) provided it as one of his points of protest against those who swore allegiance to ʿUthmān as the next caliph after the assassination of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. He thus said to the gathering of the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār,

> Do you know that Allah's Messenger said to me, 'Your position to me is as same as Aaron's position to Moses?' Does any one of you ever have the like of this position? However, we will act patiently so that Allah will bring about a matter, which was to be done.

Yes, they did. All of them did hear these words said by the Holy Prophet (ṣ) as well as the other similar words he (ṣ) used to say about Imam ʿAlī (ʿa). Moreover, they swore allegiance to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) as the leader of the faithful believers in Ghadīr Khumm. Yet, they then turned back on their heels and deviated from the straight path!

Abī-Ṭālib. Then, why did you refuse to pay him homage after the assassination of ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān, the head of the family of Umayyah? The truth is that the worldly pleasures became so beautiful in the eyes of your likes and you that you could not imagine that you would relinquish them. So, this world has deceived you and made you stray off the right path.

[1] Muḥammad Shākir al-Katabī, *Fawāt al-Wafiyyāt* 2:38.

IMAM ʻALĪ; THE DOOR TO THE HOLY PROPHET'S CITY OF KNOWLEDGE

On account of Imam ʿAlī's high status, great regard, and lofty position, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) described him as the door to the city of his knowledge, which is of course larger than any other city.

Like the other Prophetic traditions that praise Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and highlight his precedence, this tradition has attained a high level of authenticity in its chains of authority.

Jābir ibn ʿAbdullāh has reported that he heard the Holy Prophet (ṣ), on the Day of al-Ḥudaybiyah Truce, taking ʿAlī from the arm and saying,

> This is the commander of the pious and the slayer of the impious. Victorious is he who supports him and disappointed is he who disappoints him.

Raising his voice, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) further said,

> I am the city of knowledge and ʿAlī is its gate; so, he who aspires to attain the city must come to it from its gate.[1]

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās is reported to have quoted the Holy Prophet (ṣ) as saying,

> I am the city of knowledge, and ʿAlī is its door. So, whoever intends to come to this city, must first come to the door.[2]

Through his own chain of authority, Ibn Ḥajar has reported that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

> ʿAlī is the door to my knowledge and the explainer to my nation what I have been commissioned to convey to them. To love him is faith, to hate him is hypocrisy, and to look at him is clemency.[3]

Indeed, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) is the door of the Holy Prophet's city of knowledge. Of course, this city is overflowing with various fields of knowledge and sciences. In addition, it comprises all the horizons of this world and supplies life with wisdom and the rules of ethics and morality. Due to his perception, clear view, and faithful heart, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) could

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[1] Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* 2:377.

[2] Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 6:401.

[3] *Ibid*. 6:156; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Ṣawāʻiq al-Muḥriqah*, pp. 73.

comprehend this city entirely. So, whoever seeks to drink from this salubrious spring, must first come to the successor of the Holy Prophet and the door to the city of his knowledge.

It is however quite unfortunate that these people blocked the windows that opens on this divine illumination and deprived humankind of benefiting from his knowledge.

IMAM 'ALĪ; THE DOOR TO THE HOLY PROPHET'S WISDOM

On many occasions, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) declared that Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was the door to his wisdom:

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) is reported to have said,

> I am the house of wisdom, and ʿAlī is its gate.[1]
>
> I am the city of wisdom and ʿAlī is its door; so, whoever inspires to attain wisdom must get it from its door.[2]
>
> Wisdom has been divided into ten parts. ʿAlī has been given nine parts and one part only has been left for people.[3]

Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was the pioneer of and the directing guide to the divine wisdom; he opened all of its doors and established its rules. Muslim philosophers of all ages have derived their knowledge from Imam ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib (ʿa).

IMAM 'ALĪ AND THE HOLY PROPHET; THE SAME TREE

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) affirmed that Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and he belonged to the same tree; the tree of true piety and faith. In this respect, many traditions have been reported from him (ṣ).

Jābir ibn ʿAbdullāh is reported to have heard the Holy Prophet (ṣ) saying to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa),

> O ʿAlī, people are from various trees, while you and I are from one tree.

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhī* 2:299; Abū-Na'īm, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā'* 1:64; al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-'Ummāl* 6:401.

[2] Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* 11:204.

[3] Abū-Na'īm, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā'* 1:64; al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-'Ummāl* 6:154 (with little difference).

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) then recited this holy verse:

> And in the earth there are tracts side by side and gardens of grapes and corn and palm trees having one root and (others) having distinct roots. They are watered with one water. (13/4)[1]

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) is reported to have said,

> ʿAlī and I are of one tree; while the other people are from various trees.[2]

How great this tree is! From this tree, both the Holy Prophet, who is the chief of all created beings and the father of the true human civilization, and Imam ʿAlī, who is the door of the city of knowledge, have ramified. It is the very blessed tree whose root is fixed and whose branches are in the heavens. The yields of this tree have always been useful to humanity all over ages.

IMAM 'ALĪ; THE MATCH OF THE PROPHETS

Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) equaled all the prophets of Almighty Allah in their features and qualities.

Addressing his companions, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

> If you want to see Adam in his knowledge, Noah in his grief, Abraham in his morality, Moses in his confidential talk (to his Lord), Jesus in his age, and Muḥammad in his uprightness and forbearance, you may look at the coming person.

Everybody looked around and saw ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib (ʿa) coming.

Poetizing the meaning of this Prophetic tradition, al-Mufajjaʿ, a famous Shīʿite poet and man of letters, says,

> *O He who blames me because I love* ʿAlī*! Head for the inferno dispraised and disgraced.*
> *Do you speak ill of the best of all creatures? May you always be kept away and deterred from true guidance!*
> *He (*ʿAlī*) always matched the prophets when he was middle-aged, boy, weanling, suckling, and at the breast.*

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[1] Al-Mannāwī, *Kunūz al-Ḥaqā'iq*, pp. 155.

[2] Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 6:154.

In his knowledge, he was like Adam when the names and the epithets were explained for him.

And he was like Noah when he was saved from perdition and led on the ark to settle up Mount Judi.

IMAM *'ALĪ*; THE MOST BELOVED OF ALL HUMANS TO THE ALMIGHTY

Anas ibn Mālik, the servant of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), has reported the following:

One day, I served the Holy Prophet (ṣ) with a grilled bird and he ate one bite and prayed, "O Allah, please let the most beloved person to You come to me now." Immediately, the door was knocked. "Who is it?" I asked. "It is ʿAlī,' he answered. I, trying to dismiss him, said, "The Messenger of Allah is now busy." The Prophet (ṣ) then ate a second bit and repeated the same prayer. Again, the door was knocked. "Who is it?" I asked. "It is ʿAlī," he answered. Trying to dismiss him, I said, "The Messenger of Allah is now busy." For the third time, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) ate a third bite and repeated the same prayer. The door was then knocked again and this time ʿAlī raised his voice that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) could hear him. "O Anas," ordered the Holy Prophet (ṣ), "open the door." I therefore opened the door to ʿAlī and let him in. The moment the Holy Prophet's eyes fell on ʿAlī, he smiled and said, "All praise be to Allah Who has brought you. With each bite I ate, I prayed to Him to bring to me the most beloved of all creatures to Him, and it was you." Complaining to the Holy Prophet (ṣ), Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) said, "I knocked the door three times and each time, Anas tried to dismiss me." "Why did you do so?" asked the Holy Prophet (ṣ). I answered, "In fact, I wished a man from the Anṣār would come." Smiling, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said, "One cannot be blamed for favoring his people."[1]

This incident, which is known as the tradition of the grilled bird, is one of the most authentic traditions that are reported from the Holy Prophet (ṣ) in its chain of authority and denotation. It carries an obvious indication that Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) is the most beloved of all human beings to Almighty

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[1] Aḥmad ibn ʻAbdullāh al-Ṭabarī, *Dhakhā'ir al-ʻUqbā fī Manāqib Dhawi'l-Qurbā*, pp. 61; (with little difference) al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* 3:171; Ibn al-Athīr, *Usd al-Ghābah fī Maʻrifat al-Ṣaḥābah* 4:30; al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʻUmmāl* 6:406; *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhī* 2:299.

Allah and to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) on account of his remarkable piety, faith, and knowledge; therefore, he must have been the one who would hold the position of religious and political leadership of the Muslim community.

OBEDIENCE TO THE IMAM; OBEDIENCE TO THE PROPHET

In many of his discourses, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) highlighted that to obey Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was to obey Almighty Allah and His Prophet:

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) is reported to have said,

> Whoever obeys me has in fact obeyed Allah, whoever disobeys me has in fact disobeyed Allah, whoever obeys ʿAlī has in fact obeyed me, and whoever disobeys ʿAlī has in fact disobeyed me.[1]

LOVE FOR ʻALĪ; LOVE FOR ALLAH

Likewise, the Holy Prophet (ṣ), in many of his words, declared that love for Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) meant love for Almighty Allah:

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) is reported to have said,

> I admonish whoever believed in me and held me truthful to accept the (divinely ordained) leadership of ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib, for whoever accepts him as the ruler accepts me as such, and whoever loves him loves me too, and whoever loves me loves Allah. Whoever hates him hates me, and whoever hates me hates Allah the Sublime and Almighty.[2]

When the Holy Prophet (ṣ) chose ʿAlī over all others to convey the *Sūrah Barā'ah* to the polytheists, he said to him,

> Whoever loves you has in fact loved me, whoever loves me has in fact loved Allah, and whoever loves Allah will be allowed Paradise by Him.[3]

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[1] Al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʻalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 3:124.

[2] Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Ṭabarī, *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah fī Faḍā'il al-ʻAsharah* 2:166; Nūr al-Dīn al-Haythamī, *Majmaʻ al-Zawā'id wa Manbaʻ al-Fawā'id* 9:108; al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʻUmmāl* 6:154.

[3] Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʻUmmāl* 6:391.

Ibn ʿAbbās has reported that the Holy Prophet (ṣ), once, came out grasping ʿAlī's hand and saying,

> Behold! Whoever hates this one has in fact hated Allah and His Messenger, and whoever loves him has in fact loved Allah and His Messenger.[1]

Abū-Rāfiʿ has reported the following: The Holy Prophet (ṣ), once, sent ʿAlī (ʿa) to Yemen accompanied by a man from the tribe of Aslam named ʿAmr ibn Shās. When they returned home, ʿAmr was dispraising and complaining against Imam ʿAlī (ʿa). Upon being informed of this, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) summoned ʿAmr, rebuked him, and said, "Fie on you, ʿAmr! Have you noticed from ʿAlī any partiality in judgment or prejudice in distribution?"

"No, I have not," answered ʿAmr.

"Why did you then say what I have been informed against you?" asked the Holy Prophet (ṣ).

"In fact," said ʿAmr, "I hate him and I cannot possess myself against so."

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) became so furious that signs of rage were clearly seen on his face. He (ṣ) then declared,

> Whoever hates him (i.e. ʿAlī) has in fact hated me, and whoever hates me has in fact hated Allah. Whoever loves him has in fact loved me, and whoever loves me has in fact loved Allah the All-exalted.[2]

LOVE FOR 'ALĪ IS FAITH; HATING HIM IS HYPOCRISY

In the presence of his companions, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) declared that love for ʿAlī (ʿa) indicated true faith, piety, and obedience to Almighty Allah; while to hate him indicated disobedience to Almighty Allah, hypocrisy, and abandonment of faith.

Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) is reported to have said,

> I swear by the One Who has cleft the seed and created the breeze from nothing, the Prophet of Makkah has promised me that

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[1] Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-'Ummāl* 6:391.

[2] Nūr al-Dīn al-Haythamī, *Majmaʿ al-Zawā'id wa Manbaʿ al-Fawā'id* 9:129.

> nobody loves me except a true believer, and nobody hates me except a hypocrite.[1]

Al-Musāwir al-Ḥimyarī has reported his mother as saying: One day, I visited Ummu-Salamah and heard her quoting the Holy Prophet (ṣ) as saying,

> A hypocrite shall never love ʿAlī and a true believer shall never hate him.[2]

Ibn ʿAbbās has reported that the Holy Prophet (ṣ), once, looked in the face of ʿAlī (ʿa) and said,

> No one loves you but a true believer and no one hates you but a hypocrite. He who loves you has in fact loved me and he who hates you has in fact hated me. He who loves me shall be loved by Allah and he who hates me shall be hated by Allah. Woe shall be to him who hates you after my departure.[3]

Abū-Saʿīd al-Khidrī has reported that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa),

> Love for you is faith, and to hate you is hypocrisy. The first to enter Paradise will be those who love you, and the first to enter Hellfire will be those who hate you.

This rule was applied by the companions of the Holy Prophet (ṣ). In this respect, Abū-Dharr used to say,

> We would recognize the hypocrites through three characteristics: (1) they used to doubt Allah and His Messenger, (2) they used to fail to join the congregational prayers, and (3) they hated ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib.[4]

As for Jābir ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Anṣārī, the great companion of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), he used to say,

> The only mark through which we would recognize the hypocrites was their hatred towards ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib.[5]

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhī* 2:301; *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Mājah*, pp. 12; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* 2:255; Abū-Naʿīm, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā'* 4:185.

[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhī* 2:299.

[3] Al-Shabalnajī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, pp. 72

[4] Al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 3:129.

[5] Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *al-Istīʿāb* 2:464.

LOVE FOR IMAM 'ALĪ; THE TITLE OF THE TRUE BELIEVER'S RECORD

The record of deeds becomes bright only due to its profusion with true faith. In turn, true faith will be the distinctive feature of the true believers. The Holy Prophet (ṣ) thus teaches us that this true faith has one title only: love for Imam ʿAlī (ʿa).

Anas ibn Mālik is reported to have said: I swear by Allah save Whom there is no god, I heard the Messenger of Allah saying,

> The title of the true believer's record is the love for ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib.[1]

[1] Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* 4:410.

IMAM ʿALĪ'S POSITION IN THE OTHER WORLD

Another set of Prophetic traditions have expressed the lofty position of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) in the Other World and demonstrated what Almighty Allah has prepared for him therein:

IMAM 'ALĪ; THE BEARER OF AL-ḤAMD STANDARD

Due to his great position and high status in the view of Almighty Allah, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) will be conferred the honor of bearing the al-Ḥamd Standard on the Resurrection Day. Of course, the like of this honor has never been given to anyone else. Let us now read some traditions concerning this topic:

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) is reported to have said to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa):

> You shall be before my hand on the Resurrection Day. When the al-Ḥamd (praise) Standard is handed over to me, I will hand it over to you. Hence, you shall prevent some people from approaching my pond.[1]

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās is reported to have said that he, once, heard ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb saying: Stop speaking ill of ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib. I have noticed the Messenger of Allah enduing him with a number of such peculiar characteristics that if only the family of al-Khaṭṭāb could have one of them, this would be more preferred to me than obtaining whatever is under sunlight. One day, Abū-Bakr, Abū-ʿUbaydah, and I were among a group of the Companions. We all headed for the door of Ummu-Salamah's house where ʿAlī stood. 'We want to see the Messenger of Allah,' we asked. 'He will come out to see you,' ʿAlī answered. When the Messenger of Allah came out, we advanced towards him. He rested on ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib, struck his shoulder with his hand, and said to him,

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[1] Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 6:400.

> You are contended and you shall be competed. You are the foremost of all believers in belief, the most knowledgeable of all of them with the Signs of Allah, the most trustful of all of them, the fairest of all of them in distributing what everyone deserves, the most compassionate of all of them to your subjects, and you shall suffer misfortunes more than any one of them will. You shall always be my supporter. You alone shall wash and bury my dead body. You shall precede all others in every ordeal and every tribulation. After me, you shall never abandon your faith. You shall then be before my hand, carrying the al-Ḥamd Standard and you shall prevent others from approaching my pond.[1]

This tradition discusses some qualities of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), some of which will be listed hereinafter:

1) The Imam (ʿa) was the first to accept Islam and the foremost to have faith in this religion.

2) He is the most knowledgeable of all Muslims and the most familiar with the signs and laws decreed by Almighty Allah.

3) He is the most faithful to his pledges.

4) He is the mot sublime ruler in the world of Islam, for he is the only one who distributed the dues equally and he never subjected himself to any emotion save seeking the pleasure of Almighty Allah.

5) He is the kindest ruler to his subjects.

6) He faced the most violent misfortunes and ordeals. In fact, immediately after the passing away of his brother the Holy Prophet (ṣ), Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was surrounded by a long row of crises and calamities.

7) He is the supporter of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and he would undertake all the Prophet's personal affairs. In fact, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) alone performed the ritual bathing and the ritual burial of the Holy Prophet's dead body.

8) Preceding all others, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) always relieved the Holy Prophet (ṣ) from all tribulations.

9) On the Resurrection Day, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) will be in front of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), bearing the al-Ḥamd Standard.

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[1] Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 6:117.

It is ironic that the *one* who reported this tradition from the Holy Prophet (ṣ) was the same person who hurried to occupy the position of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) wrongfully. Moreover, after his assassination, this *one* delivered the leadership of the Muslim community to the archenemies of Islam, the Banū-Umayyah.

IMAM 'ALĪ; THE COMMANDER OF THE PROPHET'S POND

The Holy Prophet's divine pond; namely, al-Kawthar, is one of the paradisiacal rivers, which contained the freshest water and the most spectacular view.

The commander of this river is Imam ʿAlī (ʿa); therefore, none will have a drop of the water of this pond except those who were loyal to the Imam in this worldly life:

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) is reported to have said,

> ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib shall be in charge of my pond on the Resurrection Day. My pond shall have cups as many as the stars in the skies. It shall be as vast as the distance between al-Ḥābiyah[1] and Sana'a.[2]

In this connection, al-Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī, one of the famous Arab poets, describing this divine pond, says,

> *It is a pond that is as spacious as the distance between Sana'a and the land of Syria, and even more spacious.*
> *On it, a sign of true guidance will be installed, and the pond will be brimful with water*
> *In it, there will be numerous pitchers, and so will its cups be.*
> *On it will the hairless hero stop to defend it!*
> *The son of Abū-Ṭālib will prevent some people from reaching it, just like preventing scabby camels from reaching clean springs.*

Anas ibn Mālik is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (ṣ), once, asked him to summon Abū-Barazah al-Aslamī. When he did and the man came, Anas could hear the Holy Prophet (ṣ) saying to Abū-Barazah these words:

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[1] A village in Damascus.

[2] Al-Haythamī, *Majmaʿ al-Zawā'id* 1:367.

> Listen, Abū-Barazah! The Lord of the Worlds has entrusted to me some words about ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib. He (the Lord) said, "ʿAlī is the standard of true guidance, the torch of true faith, the leader of My saints, and the illumination of all those who obey Me."
>
> On the morrow on the Resurrection Day, ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib shall be with me standing on my pond. He shall carry my standard. On the morrow too, he shall be with me carrying the keys of the hoards of my Lord's Paradise.[1]

Abū-Hurayrah is reported to have said that ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib once asked Allah's Messenger, "Which one is more beloved to you; Fāṭimah or I?" Answering him, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

> Fāṭimah is more beloved to me than you are, and you are more endeared to me than all the members of my family. I see coming that you shall stop on my pond and prevent some people from approaching it. On my pond, there shall be flagons as many as the stars of the sky.[2]

IMAM 'ALĪ; THE DISTRIBUTOR OF HEAVEN AND HELL

One of the uplifting medals of honor with which the Holy Prophet (ṣ) awarded his successor and the door to the city of his knowledge; namely, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), is that he declared him as the distributor of Heaven and Hellfire.

Ibn Ḥajar, through his chain of authority, has reported that Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) said to the members of the so-called *shūrā* committee whom were chosen by ʿUmar,

> I adjure you all by Allah; is there anyone amongst you except me to whom the Messenger of Allah (ṣ) said, "You shall be the distributor of Heaven and Hellfire on the Resurrection Day?'

All of them said, "No, by Allah."

As a commentary on this Prophetic tradition, Ibn Ḥajar supports the meaning that is mentioned in the following narration:

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[1] Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* 14:98.

[2] Al-Haythamī, *Majmaʿ al-Zawā'id* 9:173.

Imam al-Riḍā (ʿa) reported the Holy Prophet (ṣ) to have said,

> O ʿAlī, you are the distributor of heaven and hell on the Resurrection Day; you shall say to hell, 'This one is yours, but this one is mine.'[1]

Confirmedly, none of the old or the late saints of Almighty Allah, before and after Islam, have ever attained such a divinely-granted privilege that is limitless. Hence, Almighty Allah has given Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) this privilege exclusively as an award for his extraordinary efforts and struggle in the cause of raising the Word of Allah on this globe.

WITHOUT A LICENSE FROM IMAM 'ALĪ, NO ONE PASSES THE DISCRIMINATING BRIDGE

Another tribute granted by Almighty Allah to the leader of the pious ones and the chief of the monotheists; namely, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), Almighty Allah has decided that none will be allowed to pass the Discriminating Bridge[2] towards Paradise except those who hold licenses signed by Imam ʿAlī (ʿa):

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) is reported to have said,

> When Allah shall gather the past and the last generations on the Resurrection Day and the Discriminating Bridge (Ṣirāṭ) shall be established on Hellfire, none shall be able to cross it except one who has a pass granted on account of one's loyalty to the divinely ordained leadership of ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib.[3]

Anas ibn Mālik reported that on deathbed, Abū-Bakr said that he heard the Messenger of Allah (ṣ) saying,

> On the Discriminating Bridge, there is an obstacle that none can cross unless one has had a pass given by ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib.[4]

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[1] Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Ṣawāʿiq al-Muḥriqah*, pp. 75.

[2] *Ṣirāṭ*: An overpass leading to Paradise and placed on Hellfire. The width of this overpass differs according to the passer's deeds in this worldly life. So does the speed of passing over it.

[3] Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Ṭabarī, *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah fī Faḍāʿil al-ʿAsharah* 2:172.

[4] Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* 10:356.

Qays ibn Ḥāzim reports that Abū-Bakr, once, met with ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib and smiled. When Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) asked why, Abū-Bakr mentioned that he heard the Messenger of Allah (ṣ) saying,

> None will be allowed to pass the Discriminating Bridge except those holding licenses written by ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib.[1]

IMAM *'ALĪ*; IN THE COMPANY OF THE HOLY PROPHET IN PARADISE

One of the peculiar distinctive features of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) that discriminate him from all other Muslims is that he will be in the company of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) in his paradisiacal palace in the highest place of Heaven:

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) is reported to have said to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa),

> Does it not please you that you as well as al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn shall be with me in Paradise? Our descendants shall be behind us, our wives behind our descendants, and our partisans to our rights and lefts.[2]

On another occasion, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa),

> O ʿAlī, you are my brother, associate, and companion in Paradise.[3]

From all these traditions that shed light on the high personality and great position of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) in the view of Almighty Allah and the Holy Prophet (ṣ), we conclude that the Imam (ʿa) was selected by the Lord and His Prophet to be the next leader of the Muslim community after the departure of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) from this world.

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[1] Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Ṭabarī: *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah* 2:209.

[2] Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Ṣawāʿiq al-Muḥriqah*, pp. 96; Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Ṭabarī, *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah fī Faḍā'il al-'Asharah* 2:209.

[3] Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* 12:268.

THE HOLY PROPHET'S FULL SUPPORT FOR CALIPHATE

The signs of flight towards Almighty Allah began to arrive on the scene in a row, making the Holy Prophet (ṣ) learn with certainty about his imminent departure from this world. However, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had perfectly conveyed the message of his Lord to the servants, liberated their intellects, awakened their mentalities, and saved them from the abysmal maze in which they were sinking, such as idolatry and worship of statutes that they used to make with their own hands and then stand in humility before these statutes to offer them sacrifices. Indeed, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) unshackled these people and washed their brains from such absurdity. Thanks to him, these people were now worshipping the Almighty Lord Who created the universe and gifted all nice things, including lives.

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) established his great State that adopted the human rights as a goal to be materialized and defended. In the speed of light, this State began to extend to include the biggest area on this globe, since the main concern of the founder of this State was to establish justice among people, eliminate the ghosts of poverty and destitution, and distribute the fortunes gifted by Almighty Allah to humanity with utter equality. Hence, no social class should be preferred to another and no certain people should be preceded to another.

Now that the great Messenger of Allah (ṣ) had made miraculous efforts and achieved his goal by the support, grace, and will of Almighty Allah, there was one thing left for him to achieve, although this thing is his most precious expectation and most desirable hope; namely, he was yet to unify his community and save it from all the coming seditions and calamities. This goal could not be achieved unless he would declare full support for his successor, who is also the chief of his community and the

head of his household, Imam ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib (ʿa). In order to remove the hesitation and suspicion of any person about the destiny of succession to him, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) decided to refer to and nominate the next leader in the presence of the crowded masses during the season of the ritual Ḥajj pilgrimage to the Holy House of God.

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) had already been ascertained that huge dangers would attack his community immediately after his departure from this life and joining the Sacred Yard. About this matter, Almighty Allah had previously informed him, saying in the Holy Qur'ān:

> And Muḥammad is no more than a messenger; the messengers have already passed away before him. If then he dies or is killed will you turn back upon your heels? And whoever turns back upon his heels, he will by no means do harm to Allah in the least; and Allah will reward the grateful. (3/144)

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) thus understood that there was to come a devastating quake that would blow away the existence of his community and cast it into a great evil.

Before his eyes, the horrible events that were yet to come immediately after his departure presented themselves. Expressing the menace of these events that would badly affect his nation, the Holy Prophet (ṣ), during his visit to the graves in the cemetery of Baqīʿ, talked to the dead people there, saying,

> Congratulations for your conditions! Seditious matters have come in a row, following each other. The last of them is eviler than the first.

Creepy groups of people who were the source of every evil had surrounded the Holy Prophet's community. They were as follows:

The Jews

The Jews had never stopped intriguing against Islam and Muslims every possible plot and planning to do harm to them, because Islam had destroyed them and imposed upon them the most onerous losses. Furthermore, Islam had conquered their fortresses, terminated their heroes, killed their warriors, and inflicted on them the most horrible defeats.

The Hypocrites

By hypocrites we mean those who declared being Muslims although Islam had never penetrated to their hearts and the bottoms of their mindsets. However, their tongues had uttered the professions of Islam, fearing lest the swords of Muslims would harvest their heads.

In al-Madīnah, the capital, these hypocrites once built a *mosque* to take it as their center of contriving conspiracies against Muslims. As a result, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) ordered his followers to set their *mosque* on fire. About these hypocrites, an entire Qur'ānic chapter (i.e. Sūrah) was revealed to speak of their viciousness and corruptive innermost. Of course, the danger of these people on Islam is more serious than the others' dangers. As a general rule, an interior enemy is always more fatal than an exterior.

The People of Quraysh

The bitterest and most vehement enemies of Islam, the people of Quraysh antagonized the Holy Prophet (ṣ) openly and persecuted physically and mentally all those who had followed him and believed in his divine mission, making them leave their country and migrate to Abyssinia. After the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had been stricken by the demise of his uncle Abū-Ṭālib the defender of Islam, he had to migrate to Yathrib. Changing its name into al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah (the illuminated city), the Holy Prophet (ṣ) took this city as his center and capital. This matter annoyed the people of Quraysh unbelievably and filled their hearts with rancor; they therefore mobilized troops to fight against him and extinguish the light of Islam. As a result, such combats like the Battle of Badr, the Battle of Uḥud, and others broke out between the two. Yet, Almighty Allah refuted the conspiracies of the polytheists of Quraysh and gave His Prophet victory over them. When the Muslim troops occupied Makkah, these people, coerced and forced, had to join the religion of Islam against their wills, since they did not have any faith or insight about this religion that is full of noble values and sublime principles.

In fact, the sins, cruelty, and evils of the pre-Islamic era of ignorance had blackened the hearts of these people so entirely that Islam would never find any space in their hearts. Besides, Muslims had operated their swords in the heads of the chiefs and heroes of these polytheists and spread sadness, grievance, and mourning in their houses, filling their hearts with hatred towards Islam.

When they were informed about the Holy Prophet's passing away, they decided to apostatize and abandon Islam. However, they changed their minds after they had known that Abū-Bakr became the caliph.

In coming chapters, more light will be shed on this topic.

Contention of the Anṣār

There was another problem that stood against the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and deterred him from declaring full support for Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) as his successor and next leader of the Muslim community. This problem was namely the contention between the two tribes of al-Aws and al-Khazraj who, altogether, formed the unshakable base of Islam and the basic elements of the Islamic armed forces. Although the Holy Prophet (ṣ) could remove the majority of the forms of animosity between the people of these two tribes, who formed the Anṣār, there were still the roots of contention in their inner selves—a phenomenon that was about to be used for sowing disunity among them. Actually, the people of Quraysh did make use of this contention to jump to power.

The Farewell Pilgrimage

After the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had become ascertained about his imminent departure from this world, he decided to go on pilgrimage to the Holy House and declare the sound attitude in order to save his community from seditions and discrepancies. He also aimed at highlighting the indispensable importance of the supervision of his Household over all fields of social reformation, presenting them as the leaders of this nation to every progress and prosperity.

For the purpose of pulling off this important point, the Holy Prophet (ṣ), in the tenth year after his migration (i.e. Hegira), went on a Ḥajj pilgrimage, which was his last one; therefore, it is called the Farewell Pilgrimage (*Ḥijjat al-Wadāʿ*).

In Makkah, he was warmly received by the people of this city and the performers of the Ḥajj pilgrimage. While performing the rituals of this pilgrimage, he informed the Muslims that this would be their last meeting with him, saying, "In fact, I do not know whether I will be able to meet you after this year and after this meeting."

Before their circumambulating the Holy Kaʿbah, waves of sorrow and sadness circumambulated the hearts of these performers of Ḥajj,

sweeping pain stormed in their hearts, and clouds of heavy tears overshadowed their eyes, since they knew for sure that the shattering misfortune would be very soon taking lodgings at them and the Holy Prophet (ṣ), their leader and educator, was in the final chapter of his blessed lifetime.

To establish for them the best method that will guarantee their pleasure and success in this world and the other world, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) declared,

> O people! I am leaving amongst you the two weighty things: the Book of Allah and my progeny; i.e. my Household.

These two weighty (i.e. precious) things were the unwavering guarantee that would procure the Muslim community from deviation and divergence. In other words, nothing would save them except the Book of Allah when they would act upon it and the Holy Prophet's Household when they would act loyally towards them and receive practically their laws and educational instructions. Hence, nothing else save these two would ever bring about prosperity to the nation of Islam.

The Holy Prophet's Sermon at Spring Zamzam

Near the historical well, known as Spring Zamzam, the masses surrounded the Holy Prophet (ṣ) who, at these moments, was too tired to raise his voice with a sermon. He therefore ordered Rabīʿah ibn Khalaf to declare to the masses what the he would say. So, beginning his sermon, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) ordered Rabīʿah to convey to the people his next words. So, Rabīʿah said,

O people, the Messenger of Allah (ṣ) says to you:

> Perchance, you will not be able to meet my in this very condition of mine after this. Do you realize what a country this is? Do you realize what a month this is? Do you realize what a day this is?

Congregationally, the people shouted, "This is the inviolable country, the inviolable month, and the inviolable day."

Reciting before them the noble values and the high moral idealities with which he came, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

> Verily, Allah the All-exalted has considered your shedding the blood of each other to be as inviolable as this country, this month, and this day. Have I conveyed?

They all shouted, "Yes, you have."

He said,

> O Allah, please be the witness (that I have conveyed to them Your messages).

Presenting the most binding laws of the religion, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) added,

> Fear Allah, defraud not men their things, and do not act corruptly in the land, making mischief. Whoever keeps a trust of another with him, must fulfill it.

Remark: In this section, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) presented the following points before the masses:

1. They must fear Almighty Allah and be pious, because piety is the fortress of man and the protective tool against exposing oneself to His wrath.

2. People must not defraud people their things; rather, they must weigh up their things as exactly as they are.

3. People are required to stop making mischief in the land, thus contravening the public security, cutting the road for travelers (i.e. committing robbery in the highway), and shedding the blood.

4. Trusts must be paid back to their owners, since it is illegal to seize them by means of wrong and transgression.

Demonstrating the laws decreed by Almighty Allah, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) then said,

> In Islam, all people are as equal to each other as the scales of a balance.[1] All of you have come from Adam and Eve. No Arab individual is superior to a non-Arab and no non-Arab is superior to an Arab except by degrees of fear of Allah. Have I conveyed?

All of them answered, "Yes, you have."

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[1] Commenting on this similitude, Sharīf al-Raḍī states that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) also intended to say that no one is perfect. Therefore, it is improper that some people should be preferred to others, since all of them would never attain perfection.

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

> O Allah, be the witness.

Remark: In this section, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) declared fair equality of all Muslims: equality in duties and rights and equality before the law. The Arabs have no excellence over the non-Arabs and the non-Arabs have no excellence over the Arabs. The only thing that may distinguish one from the other is piety and obedience to Almighty Allah.

Revealing a number of the features of this great religion, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) then said,

> Do not come to me carrying your lineages; rather, you must come carrying your deeds. Only then, I will treat everyone according to one's own deeds. Have I conveyed?

They all answered, "Yes, you have."

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

> O Allah, be the witness.

Remark: Islam has been founded on the righteous deeds, since in its view, lineages become worthless when deeds are corruptive and actions are wrong.

Exposing more laws of Almighty Allah, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) further said,

> Verily, the vengeance upon every blood that was shed wrongfully before Islam should now be under my feet. The first revenge I want to revoke is the bloodshed of Rabīʿah ibn al-Ḥārith ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib.[1] Have I conveyed?

They all answered, "Yes, you have."

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

> O Allah, be the witness.

Remark: In this section, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) discussed the issue of revenge upon the killings that were habitually made before Islam (i.e. in

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[1] Rabīʿah ibn al-Ḥārith ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, the Holy Prophet's cousin, was killed by the tribe of Hudhayl when he was child visiting the quarter of the tribe of al-Layth. Reference: *Verses of Ghadīr*, pp. 177) [*Translator*]

the pre-Islam era known as Jāhiliyyah –era of ignorance) in revenge. Hence, innocent people were killed wrongfully and mutual combats would last for ages during which the blood of huge number of the people of the two, or more, tribes engaged in such a combat would be shed. Such acts and conflicts have been deemed forbidden by Islam. Hence, this religion has saved the Arabs from this improper phenomenon.

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) then said,

> Every usurious transaction that was common in the pre-Islamic era is now under my feet. The first usurious profit that I revoke is the usury of al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib. Have I conveyed?

They all answered, "Yes, you have."

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

> O Allah, be the witness.

He then (ʿa) added,

> O people, "Postponing (of the sacred month) is only an addition in unbelief, wherewith those who disbelieve are led astray, violating it one year and keeping it sacred another, that they may agree in the number (of months) that Allah has made sacred. (9/37)"

Remark: This holy Qur'ānic verse, quoted by the Holy Prophet in this section, decides the illegality of postponing the sacred months (i.e. *nasī'*). In the pre-Islamic era, people used to permit fighting during the four sacred months; namely, Dhu'l-Qaʿdah, Dhu'l-Ḥijjah, Muḥarram, and Rajab. Instead, they would deem sacred other months instead of these months. For instance, they would not commit themselves to the sacredness of the month of Muḥarram; therefore, they would postpone it to the next month; i.e. Ṣafar.[1]

Referring to another important issue, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

> I advise all of you to act kindly towards women (i.e. your wives). They are restrained at you, for they do not have any control over themselves. You have only taken them by the trust of Allah and consummated their private parts by the word of Allah. They have duties towards you and you have duties towards them. Your duties

[1] Al-Ṭabrisī, *Majmaʿ al-Bayān* 5:45.

> are that you must procure their alimonies and clothing in an acceptable way. Their duty towards you is that they must not permit anyone you dislike to occupy your beds and they must not permit anyone to enter your houses before they inform you and obtain your permission. Have I conveyed?

They all answered, "Yes, you have."

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

> O Allah, be the witness.

Remark: In this section, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) discussed the issue of women whom used to be disgraced and deemed weak before Islam. Thus, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) came to honor and dignify women and to order men to treat them kindly.

In another section of this sermon, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

> Verily, Muslims are brothers of one another. Hence, a Muslim must never cheat on, betray, or backbit his brother-in-faith. Likewise, it is illegal for any Muslim to shed the blood of his brother-in-faith or to make disposition of his property before he obtains his satisfaction. Have I conveyed?

They all answered, "Yes, you have."

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

> O Allah, be the witness.

Remark: The Holy Prophet (ṣ) founded the Islamic tie on terms of mutual love and brotherhood. In the logic of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), Muslims are brothers of one another. They thus help each other in the worldly affairs and protect each other against vicissitudes of time. Besides, according to this section, the following matters are forbidden to the community of Muslims: (1) Cheating, (2) betrayal, (3) bloodshed, and (4) seizure of the personal properties.

Before ending his sermon, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) established the educational, ethical, and social methods that Muslims are required to apply to their daily activities.

Sealing his sermon, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

> After me, do not abandon your faith and return to infidelity, beheading each other. Verily, I am leaving amongst you the two things that will save you from deviation forever if you only adhere to them; namely, the Book of Allah and my progeny—my Household. Have I conveyed?

They all answered, "Yes, you have."

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

> O Allah, be the witness.

He then faced the attendants and say,

> The present must convey this to the absent.[1]

The Holy Prophet's sermon was full of all constituents of promotion and advancement of the Muslim world. In this sermon too, he (ṣ) put the Muslims under the obligation of adhering to the great Book of Allah and the infallible progeny so that the highest political and social positions would be held by them.

THE CONGREGATED MEETING AT GHADĪR KHUMM

The incident of the Holy Prophet's historical statement at Ghadīr (i.e. spring) Khumm is one of the most important events in the political history of Islam. At this place, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) made all Muslims pay homage to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) as their next leader and appointed him as the general ruler and referential authority to whom the entire community should refer in order to be guided to the most proper way.

After he had accomplished the rites of the Ḥajj pilgrimage, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) was on his way back to al-Madīnah mending his pace when Archangel Gabriel descended to him, carrying a very important message from the All-exalted Lord, relating to the destiny of the Muslim community as well as its cultural and social future. Hence, Almighty Allah ordered His Prophet to settle in that place and appoint Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) as his successor and the general authority of Muslims and to order all Muslims to swear allegiance to him. The Holy Prophet (ṣ) was not

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[1] *Tārīkh al-Yaʿqūbī* 2:90-2.

permitted to postpone that declaration even for one moment. So, the Almighty Allah revealed to him this holy Qur'ānic verse:

> O Messenger! Deliver what bas been revealed to you from your Lord; and if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message, and Allah will protect you from the people. Surely, Allah will not guide the unbelieving people. (5:67)[1]

This holy Qur'ānic verse holds a clear indication of passionate warning against any dereliction. It impresses that if the Holy Prophet (ṣ) did not carry out this mission, this would mean that he had not delivered the message of his Lord and that all his efforts and endeavors would be considered worthless.

With firm determination and resolved will, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) rushed to carry out the command of Almighty Allah.

The Holy Prophet (ṣ), carrying out this mission, put aside all the encumbrances of his journey, decided to halt at that place; namely Ghadīr Khumm, and ordered all the caravans that carried the performers of the Ḥajj pilgrimage to gather there. It was terribly hot that men had to put a part of their shirts under their feet so as to protect themselves from the burning ground.

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) then led a congregational prayer. Upon accomplishment, he ordered his followers to gather the loads of their camels and make a pulpit-like height on which he would climb and deliver a message from the All-exalted Lord.

The masses, who were more than one hundred thousand -as maintained by historicists-, paid attention to what the Holy Prophet (ṣ) would say to them.

First, he praised and thanked the Lord and then reminded the audience of the troubles he had suffered for the sake of the religion. He then referred to a number of laws, regulations, and teachings of Islam.

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[1] See for instance the exegesis of this holy Qur'ānic verse in the following reference books of *Tafsīr*: al-Wāḥidī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, pp. 150; *Tafsīr al-Rāzī* 3:636; al-Ṭabrisī, *Majmaʿ al-Bayān* 4:344.

He then asked,

> See how you will regard me on the subject of the two weighty things.

"What are the two weighty things?" one of them asked.

Clarifying the matter so unmistakably and without any obscurity or confusion, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) answered,

> The major weighty thing is the Book of Allah. One of its edges is in the hand of the Almighty and All-exalted Lord and the other edge in your hands. So, adhere to it firmly and you will never be misled. The minor weighty thing is my progeny. Allah the All-gentle and All-aware has informed that these two shall never separate from one another until they both join me on the Divine Pond. I also besought my Lord to grant me the favor that these two shall never separate from one another. So, do not precede them lest you will perish, and do not leave them behind you lest you will perish, too.

Thus did the Holy Prophet (ṣ) elucidate the sound course that would save his people from deviation and straying off the truth forever.

Immediately after that, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) grasped the hand of his successor and the leader of the faithful believers after him, raised it so highly that the whiteness of their armpits was seen by all people, and with a high tone said,

> O People, whose right is preceded to the people's rights upon themselves?

They answered, "Allah and His Messenger know best."

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) then declared and repeated three times,

> Verily, Allah is my master, I am the master of the believers, and I have more right over them than what they have over themselves. Now, ʿAlī is the master of whomever has regarded me as his master.

He then added,

> O Allah, be the friend of whomever befriends ʿAlī, be the enemy of whomever incurs his animosity, bear love to whomever loves ʿAlī, bear hatred against whomever hates ʿAlī, give victory to whomever

> supports ʿAlī, disappoint whomever disappoints ʿAlī, and turn the truth to follow him wherever he turns. Behold! The present must convey this to the absent.

Thus did the formal manner of proposing Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) for the position of the religious and political leadership of the Muslim community come to an end. Verily, with the exception of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) is the best of all of the saints of Almighty Allah.

In this way, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) carried out the message of his Lord perfectly and appointed the person who would succeed him to the religious and political leadership of his community. He thus entrusted Imam ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib (ʿa) with the greatest guardianship and the general authority over all Muslims—the same general authority that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) enjoyed during his lifetime.

The General Pledge of Allegiance to Imam *ʿAlī*

By the command of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), Muslims hurried to swear allegiance to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and to congratulate him on this position. Among those congratulators were the wives of the Holy Prophet[1] and ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb who said his famous statement, "Felicitations, O son of Abū-Ṭālib! You have become the master of me and the master of all believing men and women!"[2]

It is sadly unfortunate that a few days after the passing away of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), the same ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb raided on Imam ʿAlī's house to force him to pay homage to Abū-Bakr and the *caliph* and set fire to the house of Lady Fāṭimah.

The details of this incident will be shortly presented in this book.

Back to the main topic, the pledge of allegiance to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was so general and famous that many poets composed poems on this occasion.

Ḥassān ibn Thābit, the poet of Islam, who was present there, composed some poetic verses on this occasion. He thus said after he had obtained the permission of the Holy Prophet (ṣ),

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[1] Al-Amīnī, *al-Ghadīr* 2:34.

[2] *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal* 4:281.

On the day of Ghadīr, their Prophet called them in Khumm.
How great the Prophet's call was!
Saying: Who is you master and leader?
They answered and showed no negligence:
Your Lord is our Master and you are our Leader.
And none of us will disobey you in this regard.
He said: Stand up ʿAlī, for I will appoint you the Imam and the guide after me.
This is the leader of him whose master was I.
Hence, be faithful and sincere followers of him.
And then he prayed: O Allah! Support his supporter and be the enemy of him who will oppose ʿAlī.[1]

Al-Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī, an inspired Arab poet, composed these poetic verses on this event:

Muḥammad, in Spring Khumm, stood up and called out to declare with a strong voice
Before those who came to him, Arabs and non-Arabs, and gathered sitting around his lofty tree:
Behold! Whoever's master was I, then this one must now be his master; and he must regard this with much welcome.[2]

As for al-Kumayt, the greater poet of Islam, he composed these verses:

On that day under the huge tree of Ghadīr Khumm, he (i.e. the Holy Prophet) clarified the leadership of him (i.e. Imam ʿAlī); yet, only if he had been obeyed!
However, these men confiscated this leadership. Actually, I have never seen such a violated right![3]

Actually, no entitlement in the whole world has been violated like the violation of Imam ʿAlī's right of holding the position of leadership. This position was impounded by these men, pretending to have never heard of the Holy Prophet's binding statements.

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[1] Al-Ḥamawīnī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn* 1:74.

[2] Ibn Shahr'āshūb, *Manāqib Āli Abī-Ṭālib* 2:235.

[3] ʿAllāmah al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār* 37:158.

To sum up, the event of Ghadīr Khumm is seen as one of the most important events in the history of Islam. The grand scholar, Shaykh al-Amīnī, has recorded in his encyclopedic book entitled *al-Ghadīr* all historicists and men of letters who dealt with this event since its beginning and up to the author's age.

Revelation of the Verse of Perfecting the Religion

On that day too, this holy verse was revealed to immortalize this occasion and this day, which is annually celebrated as the Ghadīr Feast:

> This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favor on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion. (5/3)[1]

By the religious and political leadership (i.e. Imamate) of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) the chief of the pious and the principal of the monotheists, the religion came to its perfection and the greatest divine grace was completed. All praise be to Allah for this.

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) established the sound method of protecting his community from deviation in all ages. So, he did not leave this crucial issue (i.e. the issue of succeeding him) to chance; lest, the greedy ones and those infatuated with sovereignty and power would play in it. On the contrary, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) blocked all doors in their faces and did not leave for them any gap to pass through.

He (ṣ) appointed the next leader and educator of his nation. Once again, he never neglected this sensitive issue, because negligence of this issue cannot be explained but as defamation of the Holy Prophet's perfect personality. In the conception of all sane people, the issue of succeeding the Holy Prophet (ṣ) was one of the most tactful issues in Islam.

Finally, the pledge of allegiance to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) on that day in Ghadīr Khumm is inseparable part of the message of Islam and one of its unshakable pillars. Hence, whoever denies this event has in fact denied Islam as a whole.[2]

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[1] About the revelation of this holy Qur'ānic verse on this day and on this occasion, refer to the following reference books for instance: Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* 8:290; Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-Manthūr* 2:259; al-Ṭabrisī, *Majmaʿ al-Bayān* 3:246.

[2] The last statement is quoted from Dr. ʿAbdullāh al-ʿAlā'ilī in a sermon broadcast by the Lebanese Radio Station.

THE ENDLESS TRAGEDY

All through the history of Islam, there has not been an event more shocking than the passing away of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), the great savior who changed the course of history of the world, liberated man's will and thought, and saved humanity from abysmal mazes in the unexplored spaces of life.

The Final Ailment of the Holy Prophet

Immediately after his return from the Farwell Pilgrimage, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) was infected with such a harsh fever that his visitors and wives would feel the heat of his body when they put their hands thereon.[1] They therefore put to the side of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) a bowl of cold water so that he would put his hands in and rub them over his face in order that the heat of his body would reduce.

Some reference books of history ascribe the Holy Prophet's fever and death to his having eaten poisoned food, which was served by a Jewess in the city of Khaybar. Accordingly, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) used to say,

> Even now, I can feel the pain of the food that I had eaten in Khaybar. Now, because of that food, I feel my aorta[2] is about to be severed.[3]

When the news of the Holy Prophet's ailment was circulated, Muslims hurried to visit him. Some of them were weeping and others dumbfounded with sorrow, as they lived in the midst of waves of horror

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[1] Ibn Kathīr al-Dimashqī, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah* 5:226.

[2] Aorta is the great artery or trunk of the arterial system, from its origin in the left ventricle of the heart to its division into the left and right common iliac arteries.

[3] Bāqir Sharīf al-Qarashī, *Ḥayāt al-Imām al-Ḥusayn* 1:202.

and distraction. With intense sorrow, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) received them and announced the imminence of his death. He then instructed them, saying,

> O people! I am about to depart from this life very soon. I have already instructed you to hold fast to what will secure your felicity, so that I will be excused. Verily, I am leaving amongst you the Book of Allah and my progeny; my household.

He then took the hand of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), who was beside him, and said,

> ʿAlī is with the Qur'ān and the Qur'ān is with ʿAlī. They will not separate from one another until they join me on the Pond.[1]

Once more, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) demonstrated the best method of saving from deviation and straying off. He thus ordered his people to adhere to the Book of Allah that always guides to the best way and to adhere to the Ahl al-Bayt (the Holy Prophet's Household) who are truly the lanterns of Islam, the custodians of the Divine Revelation, the heralds of justice, and the defenders of the religion, not to mention the chief of the Ahl al-Bayt, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) who is always with the Qur'ān and the Qur'ān is always with him.

The Holy Prophet Implores God's Forgiveness for the Buried in the Baqīʿ Cemetery

In the darkest hour of night, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) summoned Abū-Muwayhibah and asked him to accompany him to the Baqīʿ Cemetery, saying,

> I have been ordered to implore Allah's forgiveness for those buried in the Baqīʿ Cemetery. For this reason, I summoned you to come with me.

In the cemetery, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) greeted the dead and congratulated them for their situation, saying,

> Congratulations for your conditions! Seditious matters have come in a row, following each other. The last of them is even eviler than the first.

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[1] Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Ṣawāʿiq al-Muḥriqah* 2:361.

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) had already known about the sweeping seditions that would very soon attack his people and the calamities and misfortunes that they would imminently encounter. Of course, this was one of the most catastrophic matters that annoyed him.

He (ṣ) then said to Abū-Muwayhibah,

> I have been given the right to choose either having the keys of the hoards of this world and living eternally in it and afterwards being granted Paradise, or joining my Lord and Paradise immediately. I thus chose to meet my Lord and to be in Paradise.

Abū-Muwayhibah hurriedly said, "May my father and mother be ransoms for you! Was it not better to choose the keys of the hoards of this world and living eternally herein and then being granted Paradise?"

Expressing his exigent desire for meeting the Lord, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said,

> No, it was not. I swear it by Allah. I have chosen to meet my Lord.

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) then implored God's forgiveness for those buried in the Baqīʿ Cemetery and returned home.[1]

The Brigade of Usāmah

It became clear for the Holy Prophet (ṣ) that conspiracies had been plotted against his successor Imam ʿAlī (ʿa); he therefore decided to eliminate the spirits of chaos and rebellion by hurling the conspirers and the others into a battlefield to face the Romans. To put this decision into effect, he (ṣ) ordered the prominent personalities of the Muhājirūn and Anṣār, including Abū-Bakr, ʿUmar, Abū-ʿUbaydah, and Bashīr ibn Saʿd,[2] to join the brigade so that the capital would be empty of such persons when he would depart from life and Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) would hold the position of the leadership without disputation.

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[1] Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah* 3:93; *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* 3:190. According to the report mentioned by al-Majlisī, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) took ʿAlī's hand and headed for the Baqīʿ Cemetery in the company of a group of Muslims, to implore God's forgiveness for those buried there.

[2] Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 5:312; Ibn Saʿd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā* 4:46; al-Diyārbakrī, *Tārīkh al-Khamīs* 2:46.

The commandership of this brigade was commissioned to Usāmah ibn Zayd who was still young. Thus, this young man became the commander of these old persons. Instructing Usāmah, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said to him,

> Move to the place where your father was martyred[1] and make your horses tread on the enemies. I have appointed you as the commander of this army. So, in the early morning, invade the people of Ubnā[2] and fire them. Mend your pace so that you will be there before they are informed about your invasion. If Allah will grant you victory over them, then do not stay there for a long time. Take with you guides, secret agents, and emissaries.

On the twenty-ninth of Ṣafar, the Companions put down rebellion and refused to join the expedition of Usāmah. Therefore, despite of his ailment, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) himself went out to urge the army to move. He himself also gave the standard to Usāmah and said to him,

> Invade them in the name of Allah and for His sake. So, fight those who disbelieved in Allah.

Usāmah moved carrying the standard and then handed it over to Buraydah and camped at al-Jurf.[3] Nevertheless, those persons pretended to be too sluggish to join Usāmah's brigade, defying the Holy Prophet's order. That was because they were certain that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) was in the last hours of his lifetime.

Showing the main reason for such rebellion, ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said to Usāmah, "Will the Prophet depart from life while you are my commander?"[4]

Moreover, these people began to move their tongues with plain words of burning criticism of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) for his having chosen Usāmah

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[1] Usāmah's father, Zayd ibn Ḥārithah, was martyred by the Romans in the Battle of Mu'tah.

[2] Ubnā is a village in currently Jordan next to Mu'tah.

[3] *Al-Sīrah al-Ḥalabiyyah* 3:207; Ibn Saʿd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā* 2:190; al-Wāqidī, *al-Maghāzī* 3:1017.

[4] *Al-Sīrah al-Ḥalabiyyah* 3:34. This saying of ʿUmar has been also reported by other historicists and narrators of the Prophetic traditions.

as commander over them and meanwhile, they slackened to join the brigade. When these repugnant words were passed on to the Holy Prophet (ṣ), he, having suffered the increasing pains of fever, became so angry; therefore, he went out with his head wrapped and his body covered by his garment, ascended the minbar, showed his intense wrath towards these people, condemned those who had criticized him, and said,

> O people, what is meant by a saying of some of you about my choosing Usāmah as the commander? If you now criticize this matter of mine, indeed you have already criticized me for choosing his father as commander. By Allah, his father was worthy enough to be the commander and he, after his father, is worth being commander, too.

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) descended the minbar and entered his house. He did not stop ordering these people to join Usāmah's brigade, using such statements like:

> Mobilize the army of Usāmah!
>
> Carry out my orders in this regard!
>
> May Allah curse whoever fails to join the army of Usāmah!

Nevertheless, none of those who had refused to join Usāmah's expedition paid any attention to these strict orders; so, they did not change their minds at all; rather, they insisted on staying in the capital.

In addition, the Holy Prophet's much interest in this issue did not touch their consciences and did not deter their determinations to violate this Prophetic order, while the Holy Prophet (ṣ) was in the last sparks of life.

In this way, they did not join that army, providing various apologies to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) who did not excuse them; rather, he showed them more rancor and wrath.

Reflection on the Episode

To ponder deeply over this extremely crucial incident makes us conclude the following points:

First: The Holy Prophet (ṣ) took very much interest in the issue of making the army leave al-Madīnah by all means possible to the degree that he (ṣ) even cursed those who would deter others from carrying out this matter or refuse to join the army. This clearly proves that the Holy

Prophet (ṣ) only wanted the opposing party to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) to evacuate the capital so that the process of the power transference from the Holy Prophet (ṣ) to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) would take place peacefully and easily.

Second: The one and only purpose for these people's reluctance to join Usāmah's army and impolite criticism for the Holy Prophet's having chosen him as their commander is that they only waited for the Holy Prophet (ṣ) to depart from life so that they would unfalteringly seize the power. If they left the capital and then the Holy Prophet (ṣ) died, the position of caliphate would most certainly come out of their hands forever, because it would be impossible for them to mutiny and go up against the caliph.

Third: The Holy Prophet (ṣ) did not assign any of the old Companions, such as Abū-Bakr, ʿUmar, and Abū-ʿUbaydah, for the commandership of the brigade; rather, he chose Usāmah the young. This was in reality a point of denigration, since the Holy Prophet (ṣ), by this act, intended to divest them of any point that might be explained as their suitability to assume the leadership. In other words, if the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had appointed any of these persons as the commander of the army, they would certainly have used this point to confirm that they were the most entitled to hold the position of leadership. Thus, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) blocked all gaps against them so that the unification of the Muslim community would not be rifted.

Choosing Usāmah the Young as the Commander over the Old Companions

Usāmah was only nineteen years old when the Holy Prophet (ṣ) nominated him for the commandership of the army. The logic for this nomination can be explained as follows:

(1) The Holy Prophet (ṣ) intended to eradicate any point of criticism or disapproval with regard to the leadership of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) after him, because the Imam (ʿa) was also young in comparison with the existence of old Companions and relatives in the Muslim community. Hence, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) wanted to say that Usāmah could be a leader even if he was young and, more precisely younger than Imam ʿAlī (ʿa).

(2) The Holy Prophet (ṣ) wanted to cancel out such privileges as agedness and to declare that senior officials are not subjected to such conditions like being of advanced age. Moreover, he wanted to say that

being of advanced age does not necessarily indicate experience, certain talents, and familiarity with the affairs of rule and administration; rather, the most important point in the issue of assuming the position of the religious and political leadership of the Muslim community is the availability of such qualifications as knowledge, acquaintance with the religious laws, and decency in addition to the capability of establishing justice among people.

Referring to this reformist idea, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) is reported to have said,

> Whoever acts as the leader of a group of Muslims whilst he knows for sure that there is one more qualified than he is to assume this position, has in reality betrayed Allah, His Messenger, and the Muslims.[1]

On another occasion, he (ṣ) declared,

> Whoever appoints in any office a person while he knows that there is a more qualified one to occupy the same office, has in fact betrayed Allah, His Messenger, and all Muslims.[2]

Islam cares very much for choosing the best and most qualified persons for holding the senior governmental offices, because such persons are competent enough to decide on the public interest and honest enough to be entrusted with the job of collecting taxes from the people and spending the public funds on the public utilities. They are also expected to follow a policy founded on utter justice and pure truth in their dealing with people. Needless to say, such qualities are not necessarily found in old people only; rather, they are found in those who enjoy firm faith and experience with whatever is required by the masses in the various fields of life.

(3) As he appointed the young Usāmah to be the commander of the army, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) suppressed the caprices of the rivals of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), obliterated their prowess, and destroyed their morale. As a consequence, they burst forth with frantic powers to criticize and discredit the Holy Prophet (ṣ) for his having chosen Usāmah as a

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[1] *Sunan al-Bayhaqī* 10:111.

[2] Al-Bāqillānī, *al-Tamhīd*, pp. 190.

commander over them. Besides, they acted reluctantly against joining this army and refused to join it until the Holy Prophet (ṣ) departed from life.

Revealing the existence of a dangerous conspiracy that was plotted against Imam ʿAlī's next leadership and succession to the Holy Prophet (ṣ), these have been some points about the logic for choosing Usāmah as the commander of the Muslim army.[1]

The Calamity of Thursday

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) became certain of the actual intention of those who refused to leave al-Madīnah; they only intended to plot a conspiracy against Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) to deprive him of holding the position of leadership. This fact aggravated him badly and increased his pains while he was in the last hours of his lifetime. The Holy Prophet (ṣ), in order to confirm this matter in a written form and prevent the implementation of such a conspiracy, said in the presence of the Companions,

> Bring me a pen and a paper so that I will write down for you a document after which you will never go astray.[2]

What a great and precious blessing this would have been if only the attendants had made use of it. If they had used it, they would certainly have procured unending felicity for themselves and for the next generations. By these words, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) guaranteed that Muslims would never deviate or be misled all over ages.

However, the Companions knew what the Holy Prophet (ṣ) meant by these words; they were sure that he only wanted to confirm the leadership of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) in a written document so that they would not be able to achieve their aims and take the leadership away from the Holy Prophet's Household. As a result, one of them; namely, ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, aroused a disputation in the presence of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and insisted on preventing him from writing down that document. ʿUmar therefore replied violently, "The Book of Allah is sufficient for us!"

In other words, ʿUmar wanted to transmit this message to the Holy Prophet (ṣ): We do not need you to instruct us to follow the members of your household whom you have already expressed as one of the two weighty things!

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[1] Bāqir Sharīf al-Qarashī, *Ḥayāt al-Imām al-Ḥusayn* 1:123-5.

[2] This narration is beyond question, since all reporters of the Prophetic traditions and biography have mentioned it in their books.

It goes without saying that if ʿUmar had had in his mind the least amount of probability that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) in that situation would nominate him as the next leader, or order them to protect the borders of the Muslim state, or encourage them to practice jihad, or give them any other Islamic law, he would never have replied to him so boldly; rather, ʿUmar knew for sure that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) only wanted to record the next leadership of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) in a written documented form; he therefore hurried to create mischief and wreak havoc on the Holy Prophet's intention.

Back to the event, disputation and hassle among the attendants broke out so violently that even the women, from behind their curtains, shouted at them, "Why are you not listening to what Allah's Messenger has said?"

These words agitated ʿUmar who shouted at them, "Are you not just like the women who played trickery on Joseph? If he is ailed, you will squeeze your eyes (to pretend weeping for him), and if he is healthy, you will ride on his neck!"

The Holy Prophet (ṣ), disturbed by these words, glanced at ʿUmar and said,

> Leave them. They are verily better than you are.

The party who insisted on implementing the order of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) was about to overcome, but a person shot a deadly arrow at the Holy Prophet's desire, saying, "The Prophet is hallucinating!"[1]

Is there any other calamity that afflicted the Muslims more appalling than this one? Is it possible that the Holy Prophet, who is the chief of all prophets, is accused of hallucination?

These people returned to their previous ignorance and forgot the unparalleled status of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), thus facing him with such a cruel word.

Indeed, this is a shattering calamity! The Muslims were kept apart from their unending felicity and interminable safety from deviation as long as this globe subsists.

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[1] The details of this incident can be seen in the following reference books: *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* 4:86-7, 6:8; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Nihāyah* 4:130; Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 3:114.

Whenever ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās mentioned this incident, he would weep heavily and say, "It is all because of that Thursday. What a Thursday it was! The Messenger of Allah ordered them to bring him a pen and a paper to write down a document after which they would never go astray, but they answered, 'The Messenger of Allah is hallucinating!'"[1]

See how these people decided the Holy Prophet (ṣ) as hallucinating, while many verses of the Holy Qur'ān have declared him as occupying the highest rank of perfection throughout the stages of his blessed lifetime.

Let us now read some of these holy Qur'ānic verses:

(1) The Holy Qur'ān reads,

> Your companion does not err, nor does he go astray, nor does he speak out of desire. It is naught but revelation that is revealed. The Lord of Mighty Power has taught him. (53/2-5)

(2) The Holy Qur'ān reads,

> Most surely it is the word of an honored messenger, the processor of strength, having an honorable place with the Lord of the Dominion; one (to be) obeyed, and faithful in trust. And your companion is not gone mad, (81/19-22)

Many other holy Qur'ānic verses have declared the Holy Prophet (ṣ) to be too infallible to hallucinate and too immaculate to be have delusions.

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[1] *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal* 1:355.

This painful event that took place on that black Thursday has been mentioned by all historicists of Islam. Al-Bukhārī has mentioned it more than once in his famous book known as *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* in 4:69 and 99. Once more, he has mentioned the details in 6:8, but he deliberately concealed the name of the person who had the dare to pronounce the word. However, Ibn al-Athīr, in *al-Nihāyah fī Gharīb al-Ḥadīth*, and other books has mentioned the name of the one who said that word, confessing that he was ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.

Moreover, ʿUmar himself, in his discourse with ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās, confessed that he had deterred the Holy Prophet (ṣ) from writing a document about the entitlement of Imam ʿAlī and his Household to caliphate, as is mentioned in Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd's *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 3:114.

However, these people exerted themselves fatally to hold leadership and authority. They were seduced by the pleasures of this world; so, they deviated from the straight path and flooded the Muslim nation in seditions, ordeals, and calamities.

Sorrow of Lady Fāṭimah

Sorrow surrounded Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa) the doyenne of the women of the world, and grief came upon her when she saw her father, who was dearer to her than her own life, suffering the most intense pain and saying, "How intense my agony is!"

With grief and pain, she answered, "How intense my agony for yours, O father, is!"

When he saw her tearful eyes, he felt pity for her and said, "After this day, no agony will ever befall your father."

His heart was cracked for his daughter; he therefore tried to remove the nightmare of sadness from her. He seated her beside him and talked to her confidentially. Upon hearing his confidential words, Lady Fāṭimah's eyes were overshadowed with heavy tears. The Holy Prophet (ṣ) then said to her another thing secretly, and she responded with an effluent smile!

This situation surprised ʿĀ'ishah; so, she expressed, "I have never seen such sadness followed by happiness like the one I have seen today!"

ʿĀ'ishah therefore asked Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) about what her father had told her, but Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) turned away her face from her.

However, after a long time, Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) expressed the reason for her weeping that was followed by a smile. She thus said,

> My father said: Gabriel used to repeat the entire Qur'ān before me once a year. However, this year, he repeated it twice. Certainly, this is an indication of my imminent departure from this world.

That was why she wept heavily. About the reason for her smile, she (ʿa) informed,

> My father said to me: You will be the first among my family members to follow me. I am thus the most excellent ancestor for you. Does it not please you to be the doyenne of the women of this nation?[1]

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[1] Bāqir Sharīf al-Qarashī, *Ḥayāt al-Imām al-Ḥasan* 1:129.

Alleviating the sorrow of his daughter, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) informed her that she would very soon follow him; i.e. she would not live a long life after him.

The Holy Prophet's Legacy for His Two Grandsons

The Holy Prophet's most beloved daughter hurried to her house and brought the two grandsons Imam al-Ḥasan and Imam al-Ḥusayn. With teary eyes, she said, "O father, these two are your sons. Please, bequeath legacy to them."

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) hold them close to him, kissed them frequently, and poured on them elements of his attributes and nobilities, saying,

> As for al-Ḥasan, he will have my gravity and supremacy. As for al-Ḥusayn, he will have my courage and magnanimity.[1]

Thus, the two grandsons left after they had won from their grandfather the perfections and supremacy of Prophethood along with all the principles and idealities that are included therewith.

The Holy Prophet Gives His Possessions As Alms

Before he felt ailed, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had had in possession seven dirhams. As he feared lest Almighty Allah would take his soul while these coins were still in his possession, he ordered his family members to give them as alms. However, because they were preoccupied by tending him, they forgot to carry out that order. When he regained consciousness, he asked them about these coins. They answered that they had still kept them. He therefore asked them to fetch these coins. When they did, he put them in the palm of his hand and said, "What does Muḥammad think of his Lord if he meets Him keeping these coins in his possession?"

He then gave them as alms to the poor Muslims[2] and left this world possessing nothing of its transient material.

Towards the Uppermost Garden of Paradise

After he had carried out his mission excellently, it was the time for the Holy Prophet (ṣ) to move to the uppermost garden of Paradise where his

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[1] Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 7:110; Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 4:4.

[2] Bāqir Sharīf al-Qarashī, *Ḥayāt al-Imām al-Ḥasan* 1:130.

brothers, the prophets, dwell. He was the first man whose permission is asked by the Angel of Death before grasping his soul. In the first time, the Angel of Death asked permission to come near the Holy Prophet (ṣ), but Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa), having not recognized him, did not permit him to come in, because the Holy Prophet (ṣ) was preoccupied by his own affair. So, the angel left. The same thing was repeated for the second time. In the third time, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) recovered consciousness and asked his daughter, "Have you recognized him?"

She answered, "No, O Allah's Messenger."

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) introduced the Angel of Death as follows:

> This is the constructor of graves, the destroyer of houses, and the disperser of groups.

These words astounded the beloved daughter of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), causing her heart to melt in sorrow. She thus went on expressing her grief by these words:

> Oh for my father! Oh for the passing away of the Seal of the Prophets! Oh, how momentous my misfortune is, for the departure of the Best of the Pious! Oh, how big my sorrow is, for the cessation of the revelations of the heaven! Today, I will be left without being able to talk to you!

These mournful words broke the heart of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) who, trying to console and entertain his beloved daughter, said to her,

> Do not weep, for you will be the first of my family members to follow me.[1]

When he appeared before the Holy Prophet (ṣ), the Angel of Death said to him,

> O Allah's Messenger! Allah the All-exalted has sent me to you and ordered me to obey you in whatever you may direct. If you order me to grasp your soul, I will do it, but if you order me to leave it, I will do it, too.

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[1] ʿUthmān ibn Ḥasan al-Khawbawī, *Durrat al-Nāṣiḥīn*, pp. 66.

Surprised by these words, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) asked,

> Will you, O Angel of Death, really do it?

The angel replied,

> Thus have I been ordered. I have been ordered to obey any command you may give.

However, Archangel Gabriel descended to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and said,

> O Aḥmad, Allah the All-exalted is eager to see you.[1]

When Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) became certain that her father would in a few moments depart her, she was astounded by this misfortune and she became so grief-stricken.

The two grandsons threw themselves on their grandfather, shedding heavy tears. He thus went on kissing them compassionately and they kissed him mournfully. When their father Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) wanted to lay them aside, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said to him,

> Let them find pleasure in me and I find pleasure in them. After my departure, they will be stricken by misfortunes.[2]

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) then turned his face towards the attendants and said to them,

> I am leaving amongst you the Book of Allah and my progeny—my household. He who violates the Book of Allah will be just like him who violates my practices; and he who violates my practices will be just like him who violates my progeny. They will not separate from one another until we meet on the pond.[3]

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) then turned his face towards his brother Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and said,

> Put my head in your lap, for the matter of Allah has come. When my soul leaves my body, pick it up and rub it over your face. You may then turn me towards the kiblah direction and undertake the other procedures. Before all people, you may offer a prayer on my

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[1] Ibn Saʿd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā* 2:48.

[2] Bāqir Sharīf al-Qarashī, *Ḥayāt al-Imām al-Ḥasan* 1:134.

[3] Al-Khawārizmī, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn* 1:164.

> dead body. Do not leave me before you put me in my grave. Always seek the help of Allah the Almighty and All-glorified.[1]

Abiding by these instructions, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) took the Holy Prophet's head, put it in his lap, extended his right hand under the Prophet's palate, and the Angel of Death started grasping the great soul of the Prophet who, meanwhile, started reciting some holy Qur'ānic verses until his soul came out of his body. Then, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) rubbed the Prophet's soul over his face and announced the death of the great Prophet (ṣ).

At these moments, the earth was convulsed, the illumination of justice faded, and the soul of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), the greatest Divine Grace, soared into the final abode after he had lit up the path for humanity and guided them to the right direction of the way.

The Muslims lost their control over themselves because of this horrible calamity, since they lost their only source of solace; the Holy Prophet (ṣ) departed from this life and the glow of his countenance went down on a day that will be always remembered in the world of sadness.

Ladies left their private rooms, slapping their faces with their hands to bleeding, the mothers of the believers (i.e. the Holy Prophet's widows) put gowns on their heads and went on slapping their chests, and the ladies of the Anṣār cried out so loudly that they lost their voices.[2]

However, the most depressing person for the passing away of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) was his beloved daughter and the doyenne of the women of the world; namely, Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa). She threw herself on the sacred body, wept so heavily, and expressed her deep grief with such statements like:

> Oh for my father! Oh for the Prophet of mercy! The Divine Revelation will no longer come! Gabriel will no longer visit us! O Allah, please join my soul to his soul, let me be the first to see his face, and do not deprive me of rewards for my grief for him and do not deprive me of his intercession on the Resurrection Day. Oh for my father! I announce his death to Gabriel! Oh for my father! His abode is in the highest place in Paradise! Oh for my father who responded to the Lord when He called him![3]

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[1] Bāqir Sharīf al-Qarashī, *Ḥayāt al-Imām al-Ḥasan* 1:135.

[2] Al-Bulādharī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf* 1:574.

[3] Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar Aʿlām al-Nubalā'* 2:88; *Sunan Ibn Mājah* 1:511.

Muslims were too sullen to say a single word, as if the ground shook under their feet. Either silent because of the calamity or mournful, they wished if they had departed from life before witnessing such a day.

Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) took upon himself the mission of arranging for the funeral ceremonies of the body of his cousin according to his order. He therefore bathed ritually the Holy Prophet's body[1] with tearful eyes, repeating these words:

> May my father and my mother shed their lives for you, O Messenger of Allah! With your death the process of Prophethood, revelation and heavenly messages has stopped, which had not stopped at the death of others (prophets). Your position with us (the members of your family) is so special that your grief has become a source of consolation (to us) as against the grief of all others; your grief is also common so that all Muslims share it equally. If you had not ordered endurance and prevented us from bewailing, we would have produced a store of tears and even then, the pain would not have subsided, and this grief would not have ended, and they would have been too little of our grief for you. However, this (death) matter cannot be reversed nor is it possible to repulse it. May my father and my mother die for you; do remember us with Allah and take care of us.[2]

From behind curtains, al-ʿAbbās and Usāmah handed over water to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) while he was performing the funeral ablution to the Holy Prophet's body.[3] During the funeral ablution, the Holy Prophet's body gave nice smell. Upon this situation, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) said, "May my father and mother be sacrificed for you, O Allah's Messenger! You give nice smell in your life and after your death."[4]

Upon accomplishment, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) put the dead body in the shroud and then on the bed.

The first to have performed the funeral prayer on the sacred body of the Holy Prophet (ṣ)—After Almighty Allah, Archangel Gabriel, Archangel

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[1] Al-Diyārbakrī, *Tārīkh al-Khamīs* 2:192.

[2] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon No. 233.

[3] Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah* 5:263.

[4] Ibn Saʿd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā* 2:63.

Michael, Archangel Seraph, and the angels in rows,[1]—was Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), who then allowed the other Muslims to perform similar prayers. The Imam (ʿa) said to them, "Do not let any one of you lead a congregational prayer, because the Holy Prophet is your leader in his life and after his death."

Burying the Blessed Body

Upon the accomplishment of the prayer, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) put the sacred body in the grave and covered it with soil. Thus, he buried the greatest personality Almighty Allah has ever created. He then stopped at the edge of the grave and said with tearful eyes,

> Certainly, endurance is good except about you; fretting is bad except over you; and the affliction about you is great while every other affliction before or after it is small.[2]

On that day, all banners of justice were folded; and the illumination, that had changed the course of human life from the lightless state of affairs into a safe and secure life in which the sighs of the oppressed and the moaning of the deprived, faded away.

Panic of the Ahl al-Bayt

After the departure of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), his family members panicked very much and felt great fear from the clans of Quraysh whose chiefs were killed by Imam ʿAlī (ʿa). They knew for sure that these clans awaited any opportunity to revenge on their heroes and chiefs and to eradicate the Holy Prophet's household. The first night after the Holy Prophet's departure was the longest night for them. Describing this night, Imam al-Ṣādiq (ʿa) says, "When the Holy Prophet (ṣ) died, his family members spent that night with horror as if there was no sky to cover them and there was no land to carry them. This is so because the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had taken the lives of many relatives and non-relatives."

Immediately after the departure of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), ordeals and misfortunes started pouring down upon his family members. The people of Quraysh eliminated them from their position and prevented them from practicing the missions with which Almighty Allah had entrusted them.

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[1] Abū-Naʿīm, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyāʾ* 4:77.

[2] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Aphorism No. 302.

Fifty years after the Holy Prophet's eternal rest, the members of his household were massacred on the land of Karbalā', the men's heads were put on the tips of lances, and the women were taken as captives with unveiled faces that it was possible for everyone to take a look at them.

THE GREATEST SEDITION

In my conception, throughout the political history of Islam, there cannot be found any event as horrible as the event of the Saqīfah conspiratorial conference, which played the most crucial role in the successive events of the Islamic world and whose waves extended to include all ages and sent on all the Muslim generations devastating storms that have disunited their lines, sowed dissension among them, and carried signs of their termination and decline.

The event of the Saqīfah was the first fruit of the huge changeover that followed the departure of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) from this life. The Holy Qur'ān had already expressed the great danger of this expected changeover, reading,

> And Muḥammad is no more than a messenger; the messengers have already passed away before him. If then he dies or is killed will you turn back upon your heels? And whoever turns back upon his heels, he will by no means do harm to Allah in the least; and Allah will reward the grateful. (3/144)

This holy Qur'ānic verse gives a very clear depiction of the tense crises and the black calamities that would attack the Muslim community immediately after the passing away of their great savior who had caused fountains of knowledge and wisdom to gush forth from the earth. Indeed, it was a turning back upon the heels, abandonment of the faith, and breaking of Almighty Allah's code of law. Yet, the most devastating earthquakes can never create the amount of destruction that the event of the Saqīfah had caused to humanity.

The dead body of the Holy Prophet was still laid out on the deathbed when such treacherous divisions occurred in the lines of Muslims. The dispute of Muslims came to a head, since all of them tried his best to take over power and authority and to gain the fortunes of the country.

Thrashing out the seriousness of the matter, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) says in one of his sermons,

> When Allah took the Prophet (to himself), a group of men went back on their tracks. The ways (of misguidance) ruined them and they placed trust in deceitful intriguers, showed consideration to other than kinsmen, abandoned the kin whom they had been ordered to love, and shifted the building from its strong foundation and built it in other than its (proper) place. They are the source of every shortcoming and the door of gropers in the dark. They were moving to and fro in amazement and lay intoxicated in the way of the people of the Pharaohs. They were either bent on this world and taking support on it, or away from the faith and removed from it.[1]

These people hurried to transfer power to a place other than the proper while the wound had not been yet healed and the Prophet's body had not been yet buried. They thus left the household of their Prophet alone with their agonies, resting on their sleeplessness, attacked by angst and sorrow, and being disposed to disasters and calamities. Because they violated their homage and usurped power from their divinely-entitled owners, power then reached the hands of the evilest creatures; namely, the Umayyad and ʿAbbāsid dynasties, who applied themselves assiduously to persecuting the Holy Prophet's Household.

If truth be told, the Saqīfah Conference was the exordium of all the devastating catastrophes that have been suffered by Muslims since the dawn of their history and hitherto. For instance, the tragic massacre of Karbalā', the ravishing of the people of al-Madīnah, the burning of the Holy Kaʿbah, and the predominance over Muslims by such vicious persons like Busr ibn Arṭa'ah, al-Maghīrah ibn Shuʿbah, and Ziyād ibn Abīh (the deputy governors of Muʿāwiyah whom ʿUmar had described as the *Khosrow* -i.e. king- of the Arabs)—all these tragedies were direct outcomes of the Saqīfah conspiratorial conference, which brought into being the issue of deterring the Ahl al-Bayt from holding the position of the leadership of the Muslim community, while they are the matches of the Holy Qur'ān, as was frequently confirmed by the Holy Prophet.

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[1] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon No. 149.

Back to the main topic, I will hereinafter deal with the topic of the Saqīfah conference as accurately as possible, away from the traditional emotions that may be outside the logic of scientific research, which must be the prevalent in the discussion of such topics, since these topics are pertinent to the Islamic faith as a whole.

Saqīfah

The Saqīfah (i.e. shed: a single-story structure, erected separately, and serving as a meeting hall) of the Banū-Sāʿidah tribe was a place under which the Anṣār used to gather for discussing their affairs. Immediately after the Holy Prophet's passing away, the Anṣār held a top secret meeting under that shed, which was attended by the chief of the Khazraj tribe, Saʿd ibn ʿAbādah.[1] In this meeting, they discussed the issue of the next leadership along with its importance and positive role in their political and social destinies. In this meeting too, the Anṣār referred to their struggle and efforts in supporting Islam and their contributions to the defeat of polytheism.

Political Statement of Sa'd

Saʿd ibn ʿAbādah was too ailing to make all the attendants hear him. One of his relatives therefore conveyed Saʿd's words to the people. In this statement, Saʿd said:

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[1] The chief of the Khazraj tribe and the head of the Anṣār, Saʿd ibn ʿAbādah, as well as his father, grandfather, and son Qays, was famous for his generosity and magnanimity. It is said that no house in the quarters of the two tribes of Aws and Khazraj contained four persons that were well-known for their generosity except the house of Saʿd. Saʿd was one of the chiefs who had paid homage to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) before his migration to Yathrib. He also joined the Holy Prophet's army in the Battle of Badr. Refusing to pay homage to Abū-Bakr, Saʿd was furious when he left the city. However, Khalīd ibn al-Walīd and another person togged on him, lay in wait for him at night, stabbed him, and threw his body in a well. Then, Khalīd claimed that the jinn had killed Saʿd. They moreover composed poetic verses and ascribed them falsely to the poor jinn!

We killed the chief of the Khazraj tribe, Saʿd ibn ʿAbādah.

We shot two arrows at him; so, they did not miss his heart!

Saʿd was assassinated in a village called Ḥawrān in Syria, AH 15. His biography can also be seen in Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī's *al-Iṣābah fī Tamyīz al-Ṣaḥābah*, Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr's *al-Istīʿāb*, Ibn al-Athīr's *Usd al-Ghābah fī Maʿrifat al-Ṣaḥābah*, and many other reference books.

"O groups of the Anṣār! In this religion, you have precedence and excellence that no other Arabs have its like. The Holy Prophet (ṣ) lived amongst his people for more than ten years, inviting them to abandon the faith of idolatry and to worship Almighty Allah alone. However, except for a few of them, none helped him. They could neither give strength to his religion, nor remove his afflictions, nor defend him. When Almighty Allah decided to grant you merit, He drove honor and reward to you only. He exclusively endued you with His bounties and gave you faith in His Prophet, belief in Him, and defense of His Prophet. He also conferred upon you the merit of defending his companions, according honor to his religion, and fighting his enemies. All these merits were given to you specially. You thus were the ones toughest for his enemies until all Arabs willingly or unwillingly submitted to the command of Allah and the people in far-flung areas with degradation had begun to obey. Then, the Arabs embraced this religion and submitted to the Messenger by your swords… In this matter of caliphate, you alone should take it upon yourself as you are more deserving of it than all others."[1]

Once he finished his statement, the Anṣār hurried to support and show obedience to Saʿd, saying, "You have hit the target and said accurately. We will not trespass your opinion. Therefore, we will entrust you with this position, for you are convincingly accepted by us and you are expected to gain the pleasure of the believers."[2]

In this way, the Anṣār commissioned the chief of the Khazraj tribe to lead them and expressed their pleasure with nominating him to rule the Muslim community.

Contents of the Statement

The points on which Saʿd shed light in his statement can be summed up in the following two points:

First: Saʿd praised the Anṣār for they had supported Islam and had not shown any negligence in this regard; therefore, they are the worthiest of holding the position of the leadership, according to the general rule: The gainer undergoes the fine.

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[1] Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Tārīkh* 2:222; *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* 3:307.

[2] *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* 3:207.

Second: The Anṣār must be more entitled to the position of leadership than the people of Quraysh who had antagonized and waged wars against the Holy Prophet (ṣ), trying to extinguish his light.

The entire statement of Saʿd focused on these two points no more. He never mentioned the Holy Prophet's Household and never referred to the fact that Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) should be worthier of holding the position of leadership than anyone else.

Lights on the Situation of the Anṣār

A question jumps here: Why did the Anṣār hurry to hold their meeting so swiftly while the body of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had not been yet buried?

In my conception, the answer to this question can be put in the following points:

First: It became undoubtedly clear for the Anṣār that the Muhājirūn had determined to seize power and to deter Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) from the position of leadership. The following events support this fact:

1) The Muhājirūn had declared their absolute refusal to the process of paying homage to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) as the next leader that took place at Ghadīr Khumm. They thus declared, "Did Muḥammad think that this matter (of leadership) had been accomplished for his cousin (ʿAlī)? This is impossible! This matter will never come to pass!" These words were then circulated in the city of al-Madīnah.

2) The prominent personalities of the Muhājirūn had refrained from joining the brigade of Usāmah ibn Zayd, for they feared lest rule would be transferred to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) as soon as the Holy Prophet (ṣ) would pass away. Of course, the Anṣār had awareness of this fact.

3) Using all means possible, including violence, some persons of the Muhājirūn prevented the Holy Prophet (ṣ) from writing down a document that would procure the success and safety of his community forever. They firstly said, "The Book of Allah is sufficient for us!" Secondly, they said, "The man (i.e. the Holy Prophet) is hallucinating!"

Is it logic that one is accused of hallucination because he asked to write down a document? Nay! These people knew for sure that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) only wanted to write down the next leadership of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) in a documented form.

Second: The Anṣār were unquestionably certain that the Muhājirūn (i.e. the Muslim people of Quraysh) hated Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and incurred the most fervent hostility of him, because he had killed their chiefs and beheaded their heroes. Putting this fact in plain words, ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān, the chief of the Umayyad family, said to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), "What should I do when the people of Quraysh do not like you after you had killed in the Battle of Badr seventy of their men whose faces were as glowing as golden earrings and you had rolled their noses before their lips in humility?"[1]

In these words, ʿUthmān depicted finely the sorrow and grief of the people of Quraysh for their heroes whom Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) had terminated with his sword during the Battle of Badr.

Al-Kinānī, a poet from the clans of Quraysh, composed some poetic verses, encouraging the people of Quraysh to take revenge from Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) for the blood of their ancestors he had shed. He thus composed,

In every gathering, you have humiliated those great personalities that have hurt the eyes.

How good you were! Do you not remember when you were emancipated slaves of a great personality?

Shame on you! Do you not recall the things that when a free man remembers, he feels ashamed?

This is the son of Fāṭimah[2] *who has beheaded and destroyed you and in revenge of which he has not been beheaded.*

Where are those stalwarts that faced difficulties and where is the honor of the land of Makkah.[3]

This is another fine representation of the rancor and animosity that the people of Quraysh had felt towards Imam ʿAlī (ʿa). The poet of these verses thus demands them to avenge the blood of these polytheists.

Whenever Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) came to the mosque, ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb turned his face towards the people of Quraysh who would be present there to remind them of the fact that it was Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) who had killed their fathers, brothers, and uncles.

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[1] Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 9:23.

[2] i.e. Imam ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib whose mother is Fāṭimah bint Asad.

[3] Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*.

When this issue was repeated more than once, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) felt distaste for that and shouted at ʿUmar,

> Are you provoking people against me, O son of al-Khaṭṭāb? I only shed the blood of these men for the sake of Islam.

In the name of the same Islam did ʿUmar come to power!

In brief, an undeniable fact is that the people of Quraysh hated and provoked the animosity of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa).

Ibn Ṭāwūs has narrated on the authority of his father who once asked Imam ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (ʿa), "Why do the people of Quraysh dislike ʿAlī so much?"

Imam Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (ʿa) answered, "This is because he sent the first of them to Hellfire and the last of them he humiliated..."[1]

However, when Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was popularly chosen for caliphate after the assassination of ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān, the people of Quraysh could not stand the matter; they therefore staged a revolution and declared their mutiny and opposition to this government. As a result, wars like the Battle of the Camel and the Battle of Ṣiffīn broke out.

At any rate, the Anṣār anticipated that fatal blows would be targeted at them if the Muhājirūn would come to power, because the Anṣār showed love for Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and had a share in the battles that terminated the polytheists of Quraysh.

Third: The Anṣār were certain that the people of Quraysh hated them, because they were the strong pillars of the Islamic military. They had devastated the attacks of the people of Quraysh, routed their elders, and killed their stalwarts in large numbers. Hence, they knew that if the people of Quraysh were to gain power over them, they would definitely subject them to the worst circumstances and extract the most terrible revenge from them.

This matter is clearly delineated in the statement of al-Ḥabbāb ibn al-Mundhir who said, "We fear that after you, someone comes to caliphate whose sons, fathers, and brothers we have killed." This prophecy became

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[1] Ibn al-Aʿrābī, *Muʿjam al-Shuyūkh* 4:16.

true, because not much time had passed when the reign of the caliphs had barely ended that the kingdom reached into the hands of the Umayyad dynasty who began to oppress the Anṣār and subject them to poverty and needfulness. Muʿāwiyah tried his utmost to extract revenge from them and when, after him, the power was transferred to Yazīd, he continued the same attacks on them. Their wealth and property were destroyed and their blood was shed in the plunder of al-Madīnah. It was such a terrible incident that it has no equal in history.

Fourth: The Holy Prophet (ṣ) had concluded that the Anṣār would suffer very much after him. He therefore said to them, "After me, you shall suffer very much. So, be patient until you meet me on the Divine Pond."

Accordingly, the Anṣār anticipated the befalling of such calamities; they therefore ran to hold their meeting in order to save themselves from persecution.

In my conception, these were the factors that caused the Anṣār to organize a meeting of their own under the shed (i.e. Saqīfah) of Banū-Sāʿidah.

Criticism of Sa'd Statement

In his previously mentioned statement, Saʿd ibn ʿAbādah did not make any mention of the greatest calamity that had just afflicted the Muslims; namely, the passing away of the Holy Prophet, the chief and savior of humanity. He also pretended to have forgotten the Holy Household who are the match of the Holy Qur'ān. Likewise, he did not offer condolences to the Holy Prophet's brother and door to his city of knowledge; namely, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), whose position to the Holy Prophet was the same position of Prophet Aaron to his brother Prophet Moses. Thus, Saʿd feigned ignorance about the Imam and forgot the congregational pledge of allegiance that all Muslims made to the Imam at Ghadīr Khumm. Instead, Saʿd made an invitation for himself and his people.

In fact, Saʿd, in his statement and in the holding of a meeting so swiftly, committed a grave unjustifiable mistake due to which he created sedition in the community, brought about unbearable difficulties to the Muslims, and cast them in a momentous danger.

Because of that meeting, the Infallible Household began to suffer horrible sorts of disasters and misfortunes. Caliphate came to the hands of the

Released Ones[1] and their sons who took it as a means of profit and a course to meet their lustful and illegal desires. After the Umayyad dynasty, caliphate was seized by the ʿAbbāsid dynasty who became as tyrannical as the Umayyads with regard to the deeds of injustice and persecution, if not they beat the Umayyads in this respect. Referring to this fact, a poet says,

Persecution will never come to an end as long as this nation is ruled by one of the ʿAbbāsid dynasty.

Saʿd received punishment for his deed and as soon as Abū-Bakr came to power, he chased Saʿd, who became helpless. At last, he had to relocate to Syria from al-Madīnah. However, Khalīd ibn al-Walīd and some others chased him. In the dark of the night, they sat in ambush for him, attacked, killed him, and threw his dead body in a well.

ʿUmar Denies the Holy Prophet's Passing Away!

ʿUmar was instrumental in performing a dangerous and significant maneuver in order to control the situation; he laid a hurdle in every matter that led to the appointment of a successor to the Holy Prophet (ṣ), because his partner in this mission; namely, Abū-Bakr, at the time of the passing away of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) was not in al-Madīnah; rather, he was in a region called al-Sunḥ, one mile away from al-Madīnah. So, ʿUmar sent a man to bring Abū-Bakr, but he feared that before Abū-Bakr could return, someone else might arrive in the field. Therefore, he stood in the streets in a horrified condition and began to roam the lanes, waving his sword and announcing loudly, "Some hypocrites claim that the Messenger of Allah has passed away! By Allah, the Prophet is not dead; rather, he has gone to his Lord just like (Prophet) Moses the son of ʿImrān… By Allah, the Messenger of Allah will soon return. Whoever claims that he is dead, will have his hands and legs severed."

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[1] When he conquered Makkah, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) gathered its people who were still unbelievers and asked them, "What do you think I am going to do with you?"

Humble and fearful, they all answered, "We expect goodness from you, for you are a noble brother and the son of a noble brother."

Hence, the Holy Prophet (ṣ), out of his magnanimity and generosity of spirit, said, "Go! You are now released." (Al-Bayhaqī, *Maʿrifat al-Sunan wa'l-Āthār* 7:61.) [*Translator*]

People were frightened and they fell into doubt. They were surrounded by waves of perplexity and they could not decide whether to believe the claim of ʿUmar, which was their favorite wish, or to believe what they had seen with their own eyes that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) lay in his bed at home without making any movement.

Whosoever said that the Messenger of Allah had passed away was threatened by ʿUmar's sword and was chastised by him. ʿUmar was trembling so abnormally that the corners of his mouth foamed as he was threatening every one who would claim the passing away of the Holy Prophet with such cruel punishment like cutting off the hands and the legs![1]

Scrutinizing Remark

If we ponder deeply over these astonishing steps taken by ʿUmar, we shall be able to note some important points that are worthy of attention and research and they are as follows:

1. ʿUmar became an absolute denier with all certainty of the death of the Holy Prophet (ṣ). He claimed that the Prophet went to his Lord just like Prophet Moses and that he would indeed return to the earth. He warned with dire consequences all those who dared to oppose his claim. Without any doubt, this act definitely does not prove his faith in the Prophet's being alive; rather, it shows his pursuit of an opportunity to reach his aim and it was in perfect accordance with his plan he had already hatched with his group that consisted of persons like Abū-Bakr and Abū-ʿUbaydah. The following points prove this matter:

A) ʿUmar was among those who waited for the Prophet's demise, and he had asked Usāmah, "The Messenger Allah is dying; are you going to be my chief?" He said these words while the Messenger of Allah (ṣ) was still alive and he became sure of the Prophet's death when the Prophet spoke to the people about his imminent end and informed them about the signs of his approaching death as we have explained in the foregone pages.

B) ʿUmar had stood at the side of the Messenger of Allah (ṣ) during his final ailment and prevented the writing of the document that the Holy

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[1] Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 1:178.

Prophet (ṣ) intended to ensure that people should not go astray after him. ʿUmar interjected and said, "The Book of Allah is sufficient for us!" It is but natural that he made this statement while he had become certain of the Prophet's imminent death.

C) The Book of Allah has announced that every human being would have to taste death. Almighty Allah thus says:

> Every soul must taste of death. Then, to Us you shall be brought back. (29/57)

The Almighty Allah has also said especially regarding His Messenger:

> Surely, you shall die and they (too) shall surely die. (39/30)
>
> And Muḥammad is no more than an apostle; the apostles have already passed away before him; if then he dies or is killed will you turn back upon your heels? (3/144)

These Qur'ānic texts are recited in the light of the day and the darkness of the night repeatedly. Was ʿUmar unaware of these verses while he used to hear them day and night and he used to frequent the company of the Holy Prophet (ṣ)?

D) The Holy Prophet (ṣ) had already declared that he would soon depart from this life on more than one occasion. During the Farewell Pilgrimage and after his return to al-Madīnah, he announced his imminent death. Of course, ʿUmar heard these words as same as many others did.

E) Finally, ʿUmar's silence and cooling of his temper as soon as his friend Abū-Bakr arrived while he had already announced the return of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) shows that he was acting according to a premeditated plan. He did not say a word against what Abū-Bakr said about the fact of the Holy Prophet's passing away.

2. The declaration of ʿUmar that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) would return and his warning that he would sever the limbs of any one who said that the Prophet had died—these two points had no weight at all, because cutting off the limbs and impaling are applied to one who abandons his faith or one who spreads mischief in the land. To say that the Messenger of Allah (ṣ) died does not render one liable for such a penalty.

3. Abū-Bakr, in his statement on the passing away of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), said, "Whoever worshipped Muḥammad, Muḥammad is now dead;

but whoever worships Allah, then Allah is ever-living and He never dies." This proves that there is no mention anywhere of any Muslim ever claiming to worship the Holy Prophet (ṣ) or considering him in place of Almighty Allah. Rather, all Muslims are unanimous that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) is the servant of Allah and His messenger and that the Almighty had selected him to convey His revelations and to act as His prophet.

Return of Abū-Bakr

Not much time passed when ʿUmar's friend and companion, Abū-Bakr, arrived from al-Sunḥ and along with him went to the Prophet's quarters. Abū-Bakr removed the cloth from the Prophet's face and became certain of his demise. He came out to the people and refuted the claim of ʿUmar. Then, he addressed the groups of people who were compelled to keep quiet even though they were devastated by the passing away of the great one who had brought salvation to them:

"Whoever worshipped Muḥammad, Muḥammad is now dead. Whoever worshipped Allah, then Allah is ever-living and He never dies."

Abū-Bakr then recited these words of Almighty:

> And Muḥammad is no more than an apostle; the apostles have already passed away before him; if then he dies or is killed will you turn back upon your heels? And whoever turns back upon his heels, he will by no means do harm to Allah in the least; and Allah will reward the grateful. (3/144)

ʿUmar did not raise any objection and he agreed and testified to it; he said to the effect: "By Allah, it was not but that when I heard the news of the passing away of the Prophet, my legs gave way and I fell down and my legs were not able to move."[1]

The actions of ʿUmar's excessive passion in denying the Holy Prophet's passing away and his sudden stillness immediately after the arrival of Abū-Bakr prove incontrovertibly that the gang of Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar had already conspired against the Holy Prophet' Household to deter them from holding the position of leadership.

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[1] Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Tārīkh* 2:29.

An orientalist, commenting on these conspiratorial events and believing them to have been no more than a conspiracy already plotted by Abū-Bakr, ʿUmar, and Abū-ʿUbaydah to deter the Holy Prophet's Household from holding the position of caliphate, says,

> The party of Quraysh, headed by Abū-Bakr, ʿUmar, and Abū-ʿUbaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ, was not a present situation or a product of surprise and improvisation; rather, it was the fruit of many secret conspiracies whose grounds had been already plotted and extremes firmly tied. The stars of this conspiracy were Abū-Bakr, ʿUmar, and Abū-ʿUbayday ibn al-Jarrāḥ with the participation of ʿĀ'ishah and Ḥafṣah.

Careful study of the consecutive plans of these people conducts to one fact: A long time before the passing away of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), these people had worked against Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and decided to follow a plan aimed at deterring the Holy Household from coming to power and succeeding the Holy Prophet (ṣ) in the political and religious leadership of the Muslim community. For example, their reluctance to join the brigade of Usāmah, their facing the Holy Prophet (ṣ) with harsh words to prevent him from documenting the leadership of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), and the other acts must have been planned in advance.

Weakness of the Anṣār

The Anṣār did not possess a firm determination and steadfastness; they were unaware of the political matters. In spite of their large numbers, they were fraught with weakness and sloth. On the basis of what historicists say after the statement of Saʿd, there were arguments among themselves. Some of them predicted that the Muhājirūn would provide this argument: "We are the Emigrants (i.e. Muhājirūn); the foremost companions of the Prophet, his clan, and his devotees. Why do you, the Anṣār, not accept our claim, contesting with us on the issue of the next leadership?"

Others said, "In that case, we shall say that let there be a leader from us and a leader from you and we shall not accept anything less than this."

Having noticed such weakness and collapse among his people, Saʿd angrily said, "This is the beginning of weakness."[1]

Indeed, the beginning as well as the end was weak because of their weak morale, dispersal of their rows, and lack of steadfastness that became apparent in the political field. When they had organized their own meeting and kept it a top secret so that they, before the people of Quraysh, could learn about the events that were to come, they might have obtained political supremacy. However, in this contest, they had to face humiliation. They did not gain anything out of it and finally they lost their one and only opportunity to gain power. When the Muhājirūn arrived in the meeting without prior information, differences and arguments erupted among the Anṣār themselves. The Muhājirūn very soon had the control of the situation and the reins of the government in their hands.

Jealousy and Enmity

Another factor that contributed to the defeat of the Anṣār was their internal jealousy and malice. Since antiquity, there was a great hostility between the Aws and the Khazraj tribes—the two major tribes that comprised the Anṣār among the inhabitants of al-Madīnah. The enmity was so severe that it often led to bloodshed. According to historians, the last battle fought between these two tribes in Yathrib was six years before the Immigration of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and his companions. When the Holy Prophet (ṣ) arrived in al-Madīnah and witnessed such enmity between the Aws and Khazraj tribes that even a slightest provocation led to violence, he tried his utmost to forge a bond of friendship among them. Though they agreed to a truce, it was still fragile; and when two people of rival tribes came face to face, they betrayed their inner malice for each other. According to historians, there were many occasions when this latent malice developed into arguments and fights. This same rivalry came out in the open on the day when the Saqīfah conspiratorial meeting was held. When Usayd ibn Ḥuḍayr, the leader of the Aws who had extreme dislike for Saʿd, saw that his people had selected him as their candidate for caliphate, he said to them, "If caliphate goes to Saʿd even once, his tribe will gain such a merit that you will not have any share in it. So, get up and pay homage to Abū-Bakr as the next leader…"[2]

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[1] Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Tārīkh* 2:222.

[2] Ibid. 2:224.

This shows the hidden enmity that the people of the Aws tribe had against the people of the Khazraj. It was such a thing that was very distasteful for the leader of the Aws. That is why he, along with his people, paid allegiance to Abū-Bakr. If it had not been so, caliphate would not have gone to Abū-Bakr.

In addition, some people of the Khazraj tribe also harbored malice towards Saʿd and considered the position of the next leadership too high for him. Bashīr ibn Saʿd, one of the members of the Khazraj tribe, was an important rival of Saʿd; he paid allegiance to Abū-Bakr, thus destroying the work of Saʿd.

In any case, these rivalries and malice were among the reasons for Abū-Bakr having gained the position of caliphate, but not any member of the Anṣār.

The Anṣār Surprised

While the Anṣār were busy in their machination in Saqīfah in order to win the position of caliphate, ʿUwaym ibn Sāʿidah al-Awsī and Maʿan ibn ʿAdī, who were confidants of the Anṣār but friends of Abū-Bakr and members of his group since the time of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), without any announcement they came out of the Saqīfah meeting while their hearts were full of enmity and malice towards Saʿd. They came running to Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar and informed them about the Saqīfah gathering. Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar became very much disconcerted at this. Along with Abū-ʿUbaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ and Sālim the manumitted slave of Abū-Ḥudhayfah,[1] they hastened towards the Saqīfah and some other people from the Muhājirūn followed them. They found the Anṣār gathering at their meeting place.

The Anṣār were shocked and the face of Saʿd paled; he feared that caliphate would go out of his hand, because he had already been aware of the weakness, disunity and mutual differences of the Anṣār. They had organized this meeting and kept it top secret from the Muhājirūn, but now their unexpected arrival was going to render all their planning ineffective and in spite of all their efforts to obtain allegiance, they failed.

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[1] *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* 3:456.

Abū-Bakr's Discourse

After the arrival of the Muhājirūn in the meeting of the Anṣār, ʿUmar wanted to begin the discourse, but Abū-Bakr restrained him, because he was aware of his acerbic tongue and this would not have in any way solved the impasse in such a delicate situation. It was necessary to observe diplomacy and soft words in order to benefit from the situation. Thus, Abū-Bakr with a smiling face and sweet words began to address the gathering in a kind way:

"We, the Muhājirūn, are the first people to become Muslims and with regard to our origin and lineage we are the most respected of them. From the viewpoint of clans, we are in the limits of moderation and from the aspect of faces more beautiful than they are. With regard to the Messenger of Allah (ṣ), we are most proximate of them and you are our brothers in Islam and our partners in religion. You have helped and supported. May Allah give you a good reward for this. Thus, we are the rulers and you are ministers. The Arab people shall not follow anyone except this branch of Quraysh. Do not be disheartened by what the Almighty has given superiority of your brothers, the Muhājirūn, over you. I have selected one of these two to be the next leader: ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and Abū-Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ …"[1]

Research and Investigation

It is necessary to stop here for a few moments and ponder over the above statement of Abū-Bakr:

1. Abū-Bakr has not accorded any significance to the passing away of the Holy Prophet (ṣ). This was a great tragedy for the Muslims and the most terrible incident, which had aggrieved the hearts of all of them. Therefore, to suit the situation, he should have first paid condolence at the passing away of the one who had brought salvation for them and he should have remembered his favors upon them. He should have reminded them of the good works the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had done in their religious and secular spheres. After that, he should have invited them to participate in the funeral rites of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) so that he might be consigned to his eternal abode. After that, he should have organized a general meeting, which all classes of Muslims could have attended and invited

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[1] Ibn ʿAbd-Rabbih al-Andalusī, *al-ʿIqd al-Farīd* 3:62.

them to select a caliph according to their choice, if we condescendingly accept that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had not already appointed any successor after him.

2. The logic for this discourse is pursuit of power and seeking of a political post. Apart from this, Abū-Bakr did not give any importance to anything. He tried to convince and advise the Anṣār that for the benefit of the Muhājirūn they must let go of the claim for caliphate and may not share the seat of power with them. However, he gave them the good news that they would be their ministers. As soon as caliphate was established for them and they formed their government, they denied the Anṣār their rights and did not entrust any official post to them. Moreover, the Anṣār were deprived of all governmental posts they formerly held.

3. This speech did not once mention the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa), the equivalents of the Holy Qur'ān, the like of Noah's Ark in this community that whosoever boarded it was saved and whosoever avoided it was destroyed and drowned as the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had informed.

For this, the most preferable thing would have been to wait for sometime so that the funeral processions of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) would be over and the opinion of the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) had also been sought, so that caliphate could have obtained legality and it would not have been considered a *slip* as ʿUmar then described it, saying, "Indeed the allegiance to Abū-Bakr was a *slip*, but Almighty Allah saved the Muslims from its mischief."

Sayyid ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn, commenting on the negligence of the Holy Prophet's Household, says,

> Even if it is assumed that there did not exist specific nomination for the next leadership in favor of anyone from the family of the Holy Prophet and even if it is assumed that they did not have any precedence over the Companions with regard to their origin and lineage, or morals and valor, or knowledge and good deeds, or faith and sincerity; was there any legal or rational hindrance that the allegiance should have been postponed until the Holy Prophet would be buried? Or was it not possible that in order to maintain peace, the matter of caliphate was to be postponed temporarily? Would such amount of restraint not have been suitable for the Holy Prophet's family members who were in mourning, while these members were the trust of and the closest people to the Holy Prophet? Almighty Allah has said:

> "Certainly, an Apostle has come to you from among yourselves; grievous to him is your falling into distress, excessively solicitous respecting you; to the believers (he is) compassionate, merciful. (9/128)"
>
> The least duty of the community towards the Holy Prophet who had borne severe hardships for his people and always cared for their well-being should have been that his Progeny would not be caused grief and would not be deserted in the way they were deserted, while their wound was yet fresh and the Prophet had yet not been buried.[1]

4. The argument that Abū-Bakr offered to advocate the superiority of the Muhājirūn against the Anṣār was that the Muhājirūn were much nearer to the Holy Prophet in family relation than the Anṣār were. Naturally, this claim was more applicable to the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa), because they were the closest in relation to the Holy Prophet (ṣ), since they were his direct family members. Focusing on this point, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) is reported to have said,

> They presented the tree as their argument, but they ignored the fruit.

Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) is also reported to have said these two poetic verses to Abū-Bakr:

> *If you have argued on the basis of family relation, there are others who are closer in relation to the Prophet than you are.*
> *And if you have obtained dominance on them by consensus, the people whom are the worthiest of being consulted were absent at the time of consultation.*

On another occasion, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) declared,

> By Allah, I am verily the Holy Prophet's brother, heir, cousin, and inheritor of his knowledge. Who may then have a greater claim than mine?

Having stopped at this very point of Abū-Bakr's presenting the Muhājirūn and himself as closer to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) than the Anṣār (because the Holy Prophet, by lineal descent, belonged to the tribe of

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[1] ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn, *al-Naṣṣ wa'l-Ijtihād*, pp. 7.

Quraysh), thus concluding that they (i.e. the Muhājirūn) must be worthier of holding the position of leadership than all others as a result, many Shīʿite theologians have commented on this point.

Al-Kumayt, the poet of Islam, composed these poetic lines:

> *Due to your own entitlement, the people of Quraysh have been leading us and we have thus followed even the lowliest of them and what the lowliest left behind.*[1]
>
> *They claimed that they had inherited caliphate from their fathers and mothers; while in fact neither their fathers nor did their mothers ever have any share in it.*
>
> *They (i.e. the people of Quraysh) foolishly believe that they have points of precedence over people (on account to their family relation with the Holy Prophet), while the precedence of the ancestors of Hāshim must be more favorable.*[2]

Commenting on these situations, Muḥammad al-Gīlānī, a professor, says:

> As an argument against the Anṣār, ʿUmar used the proximity of the Muhājirūn to the Holy Prophet in spite of the fact that ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib was more deserving of caliphate according to this argument than they were, because it had already been used in case of the Prophet's inheritance. Besides, al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib was the closest in relation to the Prophet and thus the most deserving among the people for holding this position. However, he gave this right to ʿAlī and from this it became established that the post of caliphate should be solely the right of ʿAlī.[3]

At any rate, these people intentionally or unintentionally neglected the Holy Prophet's Household. As a result, they were the origin of all the problems faced by the Muslim community since that day and up to the day when Almighty Allah shall inherit the earth.

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[1] by '*the lowliest of them*', the poet refers to Muʿāwiyah, and by '*what the lowliest left behind*,' he means those who came to power after Muʿāwiyah. *[Translator]*

[2] *Al-Hāshimiyyāt*; a poetic collection of al-Kumayt al-Asadī, pp. 31.

[3] Muḥammad al-Gīlānī, *Athar al-Tashayyuʿ fī'l-Shiʿr al-ʿArabī* (The Impact of Shīʿism on Arabic Poetry), pp. 5.

5. In his statement, Abū-Bakr, considering himself the leader and guardian of the Muslim community, nominated ʿUmar and Abū-ʿUbaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ to the position of the next leadership, although he was no more than a soldier under the commandership of the eighteen year old Usāmah ibn Zayd. If truth be told, this was a brilliant point, because he divested himself of any political desire, invaded the inner selves of the Anṣār, and had power over their emotions and feelings.

Tactfully, ʿUmar answered him, "This shall never take place as long as you are alive. No one shall be competent enough to drag you from the place in which the Messenger of Allah had put you!"

Commenting on this statement of ʿUmar, a historicist says, "We do not know when the Holy Prophet (ṣ) placed Abū-Bakr in such a position or at least referred to this. In fact, Abū-Bakr was, just like the other Muhājirūn, no more than a soldier under the commandership of Usāmah ibn Zayd. Had the Holy Prophet (ṣ) nominated Abū-Bakr to this position, he would have at least ordered him to stay in al-Madīnah and would not have ordered him to join that battle.

Altercations and Encounters

The Saqīfah conspiratorial conference changed into a violent conflict between the supporters of Saʿd ibn ʿAbādah on one hand and the group of the Muhājirūn and the persons from among the Anṣār who backed them on the other. They were predominated by political desires, personal fancies, and tribal fanaticisms. The dispute then erupted so violently.

'Umar's Role

When some people from the Anṣār condemned swearing allegiance to Abū-Bakr, ʿUmar violently stood up to speak. He said, "It can never be that two persons occupy one position. By Allah, the Arabs will never agree to give you leadership while their Prophet was from a people other than you. However, they shall not object if this position is held be one from the group to which the Prophet belonged. For any one who refrains from this, we have a clear argument and a clear power. Who is it that can oppose us in obtaining the kingdom of Muḥammad while we are his friends and partners? None does but one who prefers falsehood or one who is led to sinfulness and who throws himself into destruction…!"

There was nothing new in this discourse except that it emphasized what Abū-Bakr had said before; namely; the Muhājirūn were more deserving

of the succession to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) than anyone else and that they were his friends and partners.

In other words, ʿUmar declared that the Arabs would not submit to any person as their leading authority unless this person would belong to the clan of the Holy Prophet (ṣ). Of course, this claim is worthless, because Islam is too great to be for the Arabs only; rather, it came to embrace the entire humanity. The leadership in the name of this religion has nothing to do with the pleasure or the wrath of the Arabs, since it is an issue that concerns all Muslims equally.

The other refuting point is that the Muhājirūn did not belong to the very family of the Holy Prophet (ṣ); rather, the one who was the closest to the Holy Prophet lineally, socially, and practically was his brother, cousin, and the father of his two grandsons; namely, Imam ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib (ʿa).

Al-Ḥabbāb ibn al-Mundhir

ʿUmar had not finished his words when al-Ḥabbāb ibn al-Mundhir stood up to speak, saying, "O groups of the Anṣār, get hold of your right and do not listen to this man or his companion, because they will deprive you of your share in this matter. Thus, if they do not accept what you want, chase them out of this land and gain dominance over them. By Allah, you are more deserving than they are in this matter, because it was through your swords that people embraced Islam while previously they had no faith. I am the best refuge and more far-sighted than they are. I am a lion among the cubs. By Allah, if you wish, I can strip them off like a barren tree. By Allah, if anyone refutes my statement, I shall cut off his nose with the sword…"[1]

This statement, which was full of anger and warnings, was a challenge to the Muhājirūn to an assured conflict from the people of al-Madīnah. At the same time, it was a self-praise in their valor.

In this statement, al-Ḥabbāb ibn al-Mundhir called his people, the Anṣār, to take the procedure of banishing the Muhājirūn from al-Madīnah, the capital, if they would refuse to hand over the leadership of the Muslim community to the Anṣār.

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[1] Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi 'l-Tārīkh* 2:330; Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Muqaddimah* 2:488.

He also called his people to wage a war against the Muhājirūn as another solution.

He then praised himself, reminding the attendants that he was one of the heroes who entered the most violent battles; therefore, he would smash the nose of any one who would object to him.

ʿUmar replied to him and screamed, "In that case, Allah shall kill you."

Al-Ḥabbāb said, "Rather, He shall kill you."

Heated argument then broke out between the two parties to the degree that they were about to engage in atrocities and bloodshed against each other.

Abū-Bakr Wins Caliphate

Abū-Bakr anticipated any development in the situation; therefore, he turned towards the Anṣār and could calm down the situation. Immediately, the members of his group, fearing that the situation might go out of control, acted as swiftly as lightning and paid homage to Abū-Bakr. The first to swear such allegiance were ʿUmar, Bashīr, Usayd ibn Ḥuḍayr, ʿUwaym ibn Sāʿidah, Maʿan ibn ʿAdī, Abū-ʿUbaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ, Sālim the manumitted slave of Abū-Ḥudhayfah, and Khalīd ibn al-Walīd.

This group made great efforts to force the other people to pay allegiance as same as they had just done. In this matter, ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb was the most active; he shouted at and threatened the people to secure their allegiance. If one refrained, ʿUmar would strike him with his stick on the head. He could hear the Anṣār saying, "You have beaten Saʿd."

ʿUmar replied with fury and anger, "Hit him! May Allah kill him, because he is a mischief-maker."[1]

When allegiance to Abū-Bakr was sworn, his supporters took him to the Prophet's mosque as a bride carried to the bridal chamber[2] while the Holy Prophet's body was laid on his deathbed and was yet to be buried. Meanwhile, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was busy in the funeral arrangements of the burying the Holy Prophet (ṣ).

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[1] Ibn ʿAbd-Rabbih al-Andalusī, *al-ʿIqd al-Farīd* 5:12.

[2] Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 2:8.

When Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) learnt about the allegiance to Abū-Bakr, he said this poetic verse to express his situation,

The people became involved in what they preferred and stood up in rebellion while Zayd was surrounded by a great calamity.[1]

Thus, Abū-Bakr was paid homage and appointed as the ruler of the Muslim community so swiftly and suddenly although this process of pledge of allegiance was full of spurious points and objections. All this took place while the Holy Prophet's Household were completely disregarded. None paid any attention to them. Since that day, all types of calamities and taunts confronted them; they were subjected to various tortures and calamites, including the carnage of Karbalā' and all these events were rooted in that meeting of Saqīfah and nothing else.

'Umar's Attitude to Pledging Allegiance to Abū-Bakr

ʿUmar passed cruel judgment on the pledge of Allegiance to Abū-Bakr. He said his famous word: "Verily, the pledge of allegiance to Abū-Bakr was a slip, but Allah saved Muslims from its bad consequences. Hence, you must kill any one who may invite you to its like."[2]

Investigation of this word, which is full of all sorts of criticism and defamation, leads us to the following points:

1) ʿUmar confirmed that the pledge of allegiance to Abū-Bakr had been a slip, meaning evil, wrongdoing, blunder, surprise, or unexpected event. However the meaning meant by ʿUmar was, the result is that he described

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[1] Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 2:5; *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* 10:44; *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal* 1:55; al-Ṣafadī, *Tamām al-Mutūn*, pp. 137.

[2] Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 6:14.

Historicists report that ʿUmar said this word on more than one occasion, one of which is reported as follows:

ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ascended the minbar and said, "Verily, the swearing of allegiance to Abū-Bakr was a slip. May Allah protect from its bad consequences. Whoever repeats its like, then you must kill him. Whoever swears allegiance to a man before counseling the Muslims, both of them are surely perishing men. Therefore, you must kill them both."

However, ʿUmar's words can be also understood as follows: "The swearing of allegiance to Abū-Bakr was a slip, but Allah saved the Muslims from its evil." [*translator*]

the coming to power by Abū-Bakr as big mistake, dispraised, and discommended.

2) He besought to God to save the Muslims from the evil consequences and bad repercussions of that event.

3) He issued a decision of condemning to death any person who would invite Muslims to such a pledge of allegiance.

4) In conclusion, ʿUmar vituperated the pledge of allegiance to Abū-Bakr, because it was not based on the sound foundations and true logic of coming to power.

Criticisms of Pledging Allegiance to Abū-Bakr

The process of pledging allegiance to Abū-Bakr faces a number of objections, some of which are as follows:

First: In this process, the opinion of the members of the Holy Household, who are the equals of the Holy Qur'ān, was not taken at all; rather, they were eliminated, neglected, and abandoned.

Second: The process in which Abū-Bakr was paid homage and he consequently could come to power did not include the people of consultation (i.e. *ahl al-ḥall wa'l-ʿaqd* in the terminology of the Muslim jurisprudence), whose opinion is legally specified as a condition for the legality of any elections.

Third: The process of pledging allegiance to Abū-Bakr took place in a secret rather than a congregational place.

In this connection, ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Najjār, a modern writer, states,

> Having a look into the way allegiance was pledged to Abū-Bakr, making him come to power, proves that consultation about this matter was obviously imperfect. It is understandably known that such processes must be made in a place that includes the congregation of Muslims and that must be preceded by a public announcement.[1]

Fourth: Many Muslims were coerced to pay homage to Abū-Bakr. So, their homage was not optional and was not compatible with their personal

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[1] ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Najjār, *al-Khulafā' al-Rāshidūn*, pp. 16.

wills. In fact, the famous stick (i.e. *durrah*) of ʿUmar played a major role in giving rise to this pledge of allegiance.

Five: Those who swore allegiance to Abū-Bakr did not specify as condition that Abū-Bakr should follow the Book of Allah and the Holy Prophet's practice. Of course, the validity of any homage is contingent on this condition.

The Anṣār Defeated

The Anṣār were thus withdrawn from the political scene, attired with humility and disgrace, and losing all their prestige and power.

Poetizing the defeat of the Anṣār, Ḥassān ibn Thābit, composed these verses:

> *We had supported and sheltered the Prophet, challenging all the vicissitudes and misfortunes of nights.*
>
> *For them (i.e. the Muhājirūn), we gave halves of the properties that we had earned with our own hands, just like the risky distribution of the slaughter animals.*
>
> *Our reward for all these favors that we had done them was then that they ignored us totally out of their foolishness! Indeed, this is unfair!*[1]

Since that day, nothing more than disgrace and humiliation attacked the Anṣār. They had to encounter various sorts of ordeals and calamities at the hands of many rulers and kings. In fact, that was the punishment for their having abandoned the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa). In short, the Anṣār were the first to open the door of persecution and assault against the Holy Prophet's Household.

Celebration of the people of Quraysh

When Abū-Bakr held the position of leadership, the tribes of Quraysh could not hide their delight; they were overjoyed, since they considered it a great victory for themselves, because their hopes and aspirations would become true. Expressing this joy, Abū-ʿAbrah, a poet from Quraysh, composed these couplets:

> *Thanks to the One deserving of all praise. The trouble was gone and allegiance given to the Ṣiddīq (Abū-Bakr).*

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[1] Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 6:25.

Then, the legs of Saʿd wavered after he had hoped that the furthest star would be within his reach.

Caliphate is for Quraysh and, by the Lord of Muḥammad, you have no share in it.[1]

These couplets talk about the delight of the people of Quraysh for winning caliphate, speak ill of the Anṣār, and discuss their deprivation of this position.

Among those who expressed joy at Abū-Bakr's coming to power was ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ. At that time, he was not present in al-Madīnah, since he was on a journey. When he returned and learned about Abū-Bakr's holding the position of leadership, he remarked:

When you go to the Aws, tell them, and when you meet the Khazraj, say to them:

You hoped to rule in al-Madīnah. But before it was cooked, the pot was taken off the fire.[2]

Happiness and joy engulfed all the tribes of Quraysh and they began to support the rulership of Abū-Bakr.

When the news of the Prophet's passing away reached Makkah, its people had decided to announce their apostasy from Islam, but when they were further informed that Abū-Bakr became the caliph, they decided to remain in his obedience and expressed their happiness and pleasure at the turn of the events, since they got rid of both the Anṣār and the Holy Prophet's Household.

The Role of Abū-Sufyān

First of all, Abū-Sufyān rose up against the caliphate of Abū-Bakr; he therefore came to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and encouraged him to rise up against Abū-Bakr and take back his usurped right of holding this position, assuring that he would support him in this regard. He thus said, "I see dust in the atmosphere and nothing except bloodshed will settle the dust. O clan of ʿAbd-Manāf, what Abū-Bakr has to do with your affair? Where are those two oppressed ones; namely, ʿAlī and al-ʿAbbās? Why should this matter be held by the lowliest clan of Quraysh?"

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[1] Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār, *al-Muwaffaqiyyāt*, pp. 80; Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 6:8.

[2] Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 6:8.

He then said to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), "Stretch your hand so that I may pay homage to you. By Allah, if you wish, I can fill the land with cavalry and infantry." He then cited these poetic verses of al-Mutalammis, a poet, as example:

None could remain established against whom destruction is intended except those two oppressed ones, the ass of the locality and the nail.

One of them shall be buried totally in the grave and the other shall be injured; and none shall weep for him.

He then added,

Thus, after dignity and strength, Quraysh has become submissive to the Taym[1] *without even striking of swords.*[2]

By this situation, Abū-Sufyān was neither sincere nor loyal to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), because he was the most vehement enemy of Islam and Muslims. However, the Imam (ʿa) was aware of his real intention. Thus, he did not give a positive reply and he refused the offer. He thus said to Abū-Sufyān in an angry tone,

> By Allah, you intend nothing but mischief. By Allah, for ages you have wished ill for Islam and we are not in need for your advice..."[3]

Abū-Sufyān continued to create mischief and instigate Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) to rise up against Abū-Bakr. He thus sang as follows:

O Descendants of Hāshim, do not let them vie you, especially the family of Taym ibn Murrah or the clan of ʿAdī.

The affair (of caliphate) is for none except you, none deserves it save you, and no one is superior to Abu'l-Ḥasan ʿAlī.

O Abu'l-Ḥasan, have courage as you are most deserving of the work that is awaited.[4]

Confirmedly, the opposition of Abū-Sufyān to Abū-Bakr's caliphate was not based on faith in favor of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa); rather, it was only a trick against Islam, since this man always waited for any opportunity to harm

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[1] Taym is one of the lowliest clans of Quraysh to which Abū-Bakr belonged.

[2] Abu'l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *al-Aghānī* 6:356.

[3] Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Tārīkh* 2:220.

[4] Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 6:7.

the religion of Islam. Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) declined his offer and gave no importance to his false show of kindness, because Abū-Sufyān had already had a very good connection with Abū-Bakr.

Some reference books of the history of Islam confirm that there was a secret agreement between Abū-Bakr and Abū-Sufyān according to which Abū-Bakr had pledged that he would appointed Abū-Sufyān's sons as the deputy governors of Syria and al-Ṭā'if. Hence, when Abū-Bakr came to power, he executed the articles of this secret agreement. Yazīd, the son of Abū-Sufyān, was given deputy governorship over Syria. On his way to Syria to practice his official missions, Yazīd ibn Abī-Sufyān was riding on an animal while Abū-Bakr was seeing him off walking.

After the death of Abū-Bakr, ʿUmar came to power and appointed Muʿāwiyah, the other son of Abū-Sufyān, as the deputy governor of Syria after the death of his brother Yazīd.[1]

The other article of the secret agreement was also implemented when the descendants of Umayyah had a share in the position of caliphate.

About the very strong relationship between Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar from one side and Abū-Sufyān from the other, al-Bukhārī narrates that Abū-Sufyān, once, passed by some Muslims among whom were Abū-Bakr, Salmān, Ṣuhayb, and Bilāl. One of them said, "Did the swords of Allah not smite the neck of this enemy of Allah?"

Abū-Bakr chastised them in harsh words saying, "Are you saying this about the chief and master of Quraysh?"

Then, Abū-Bakr hastened to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and told him what people had said about Abū-Sufyān. Answering him, the Prophet (ṣ) said, "O Abū-Bakr, you have probably displeased them. Even if you have not displeased them, then you have certainly displeased Allah."[2]

This matter clearly shows the close mutual relationship between Abū-Bakr and Abū-Sufyān.

Similarly, ʿUmar had a very close relationship with Abū-Sufyān. In his own house, ʿUmar dedicated a very well-decorated room to Abū-Sufyān

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[1] *Ibid.*

[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* 2:362.

and did not allow anyone else to enter it. When he was asked about the reason, ʿUmar said, "This is the chief of Quraysh."[1]

ʿUmar also gave Abū-Sufyān's wife, Hind, much money from the public funds to use them in trade and to be saved from poverty.

The Holy Prophet's Attitude to the Umayyads

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) had destroyed the members of the Umayyad family and attired them the garb of disgrace and humility. One day, he (ṣ) saw Abū-Sufyān riding a camel while his son Yazīd was grasping its bridle and Muʿāwiyah driving it. Upon this scene, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) imprecated Allah's curse upon the three, saying,

> O Allah, please pour Your curses upon the rider, the grasper, and the driver.[2]

When Muʿāwiyah proposed to a Muslim woman, she came to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and asked for his opinion. The Holy Prophet (ṣ) warned her against so and said,

> Do not marry him. He is but lowly and worthless.[3]

During the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), the Umayyads were placed in the deepest abyss of disgrace and humility. However, in the reigns of Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar, their social situation was lifted up and they became senior officials in the Muslim government until they could come to power. ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb nominated ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān, the chief of the Umayyad family, as his successor and invested him with power and authority over the Muslims. This fact can be easily seen by any one who studies the so-called *shūrā* system that ʿUmar designed.

Back to the main topic, the attitude of Abū-Sufyān to the caliphate of Abū-Bakr, although it outwardly revealed dissatisfaction and discontent, was definitely fictitious and unreal. For this reason, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) did not pay any attention to Abū-Sufyān's attitude and refrained from responding to him.

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[1] Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar Aʿlām al-Nubalāʾ* 3:341.

[2] *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* 11:357; Naṣr ibn Muzāḥim, *Waqʿat Ṣiffīn*, pp. 344.

[3] Al-Diyārbakrī, *Tārīkh al-Khamīs* 2:296.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE AHL AL-BAYT TO THE HOMAGE TO ABŪ-BAKR

Historicists and narrators of the Prophetic traditions have unanimously and clearly demonstrated that the Holy Prophet's family members and relatives refused paying homage to Abū-Bakr and objected to his impulsive jumping to the position of the leadership of the Muslim community. Disappointed and displeased, they believed that they were more entitled to this position than Abū-Bakr, because they were the closest to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) lineally and practically.

Let us now mention their situations in further details:

Al-'Abbās ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib

The Holy Prophet's paternal uncle, al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, was confident that his nephew ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib was the worthiest of succeeding the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and holding the position of religious and political leadership. He thus hurried to say to him, "Son of my brother, extend your hand so that I will pay homage to you. If I do so, the people will say that the Holy Prophet's uncle has paid homage to the Holy Prophet's cousin; therefore, none will disagree to your leadership."

Replying his uncle, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) said, "Who else can demand this position?"[1]

Commenting on this incident, Dr. Ṭāhā Ḥusayn says,

> When al-ʿAbbās scrutinized the matter, he discovered that his nephew was more rightful to hold this position of leadership than he was, because the nephew was the foster son of the Holy Prophet, the most precedent in favor of Islam, and the unbeatable star of all situations. The Holy Prophet used to call him as his brother. One day, Ummu-Ayman jokingly said to the Holy Prophet, "Do you call him your brother and you have given him your daughter in marriage?" Besides, the Holy Prophet said to him, "Your position to me is exactly like the position of Prophet Aaron to Prophet Moses except that no prophet shall come after me." On another occasion, the Holy Prophet said to the Muslims, "'Alī is now the master of whomever has regarded me as his master." For all these reasons, al-ʿAbbās, immediately after the passing away of the Holy Prophet, came to his nephew and said, "Extend your hand so that I will pay homage to you... etc."[2]

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[1] Ibn Qutaybah, *al-Imāmah wa'l-Siyāsah* 1:4.

[2] Dr. Ṭāhā Ḥusayn, *ʿAliyyun wa-Banūh* (ʿAlī and his Sons), pp. 19.

It is worth mentioning that al-Maghīrah ibn Shuʿbah suggested to Abū-Bakr that he might offer to al-ʿAbbās to hold some governmental offices and that he might give him some money to pull him to his side. Approving of this suggestion, Abū-Bakr, along with ʿUmar, Abū-ʿUbaydah, and al-Maghīrah, visited al-ʿAbbās and said, "My desire is that I should grant you a share in this matter (i.e. authority), and this share should continue to your sons and descendants after you."

Straight away, al-ʿAbbās understood their motive, which was to separate him from Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and attach him to their party. He therefore answered,

"Verily, Almighty Allah has sent Muḥammad—as exactly as He has informed—as prophet and as guardian over the faithful believers. Hence, the Prophet was Almighty Allah's grace to his nation. When He took his soul and chose for him what He has in possession, the Almighty relegated the Muslims' administration of their own affairs to themselves so that they would be able to decide on the best for themselves, provided that they would follow the truth and never deviate due to following their fancies. If you, Abū-Bakr, claim that you have taken this leadership due to your closeness to the Messenger of Allah, then you will have usurped our right. If you claim that you have taken this leadership due to the desire of the faithful believers, then we are part of these believers! Hence, we have neither disputed you about this matter without evidence nor have we fought you. Now that you claim that you desire for giving me an office; if this office is one of the believers' rights, then you are not allowed to use it according to your own opinion; and if this position is our right exclusively, then we will not accept part of it and leave the other part. Moreover, slow down! The Messenger of Allah is a tree whose branches are we exclusively, while you are only its neighbors."[1]

These words created ceaseless concern in the minds of these people; so, they left al-ʿAbbās without gaining any point that would justify their act of coming to power before consulting the family members of the Holy Prophet (ṣ).

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[1] Ibn Qutaybah, *al-Imāmah wa'l-Siyāsah* 1:15.

Imam *ʻAlī* ibn Abī-Ṭālib

Confirmedly, Imam ʿAlī's attitude to the pledging of allegiance to Abū-Bakr and his coming to power was characterized by loathing and displeasure. This is because the Imam (ʿa) was the worthiest of holding this position and more entitled to it than anyone else. Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was the closest to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) not to mention the facts that he was the Prophet's brother, cousin, and father of his two grandsons. Besides, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was the one gifted with extraordinary talents and geniuses; therefore, he was presented as the door to the Holy Prophet's city of knowledge.

It is well known that no other Muslim had ever possessed even one percent of Imam ʿAlī's noble dispositions and honorable qualities. Nonetheless, these people belittled him and denied deliberately all these qualifications due to which none else was competent enough to hold the position of the religious and political leadership of the Muslim community.

In conclusion, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) strictly opposed paying homage to Abū-Bakr and considered it a clear-cut act of trespass against himself, because he knew for sure that the position of succession to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) was his right alone, and with regard to the caliphate, his position was "*like the pivot of the mill; such a lofty position that flood is unable to reach it and the birds also cannot scale those heights*," as he himself described.

Let us now mention, yet briefly, some situations of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) with Abū-Bakr.

Imam *ʻAlī* Refrains from Pledging Allegiance to Abū-Bakr

Declaring his intense indignation, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) refused to swear allegiance to Abū-Bakr, because the Imam was the greatest personality in Islam. He was just like a towering mountain; "the flood water flows down from him and the bird cannot fly up to him." Accordingly and with all the more reason, he would never pay homage to one who never matched him in knowledgeability, superiority, struggle for the religion, and all the other talents he exclusively enjoyed.

Forcing Imam *ʻAlī* to Pay Homage

The ruling authorities decided to force Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) to pay allegiance to Abū-Bakr; they therefore appointed some people to execute this matter.

Headed by ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb who was shouting, threatening, and having in his hand a firebrand to set the house of the Divine Revelation on fire, some constables and mercenaries went to Imam ʿAlī's house.

The Holy Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa) the daughter of and most beloved to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) came out and cried at ʿUmar, "What have you come with, son of al-Khaṭṭāb?" Violently, ʿUmar answered, "What I have come with is more forceful than what your father had come with!"[1]

ʿUmar shouted again, "I swear by Him Who grasps ʿUmar's soul in His hand, if you will not come out, I will set this house on fire along with all those therein!"

Some people who feared Allah and showed some respect to the sacredness of the people of Imam ʿAlī's house, said, "O Abū-Ḥafṣ! In this house is Fāṭimah!"

Carelessly, ʿUmar said, "So what? So what?"

Finally, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was led out of his house violently and brought before Abū-Bakr. The party of Abū-Bakr shouted at him, "Pay homage to Abū-Bakr." The Imam (ʿa) replied them in a very rational manner without being fearful of their despotism and tyranny,

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[1] Al-Bulādharī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf* 2:10.

Historicists and narrators have unanimously reported that ʿUmar threatened to set Imam ʿAlī's house on fire if he would refuse to pay allegiance to Abū-Bakr. Celebrating this incident, Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm, a modern Egyptian poet, composed these poetic verses:

Once, ʿAlī received a word from ʿUmar. How noble the addressee was, and how great the addresser was:
"I will set your house on fire and I will not leave a single item unburned therein, if you do not pay homage; even though the daughter of the Chosen Prophet is there."
Other than Abū-Ḥafṣ (ʿUmar), who could say such a word in the face of the hero and protector of the descendants of ʿAdnān (i.e. the Arabs)?

This incident has been also mentioned in many reference books, some of which are as follows: Ibn Qutaybah, *al-Imāmah wa'l-Siyāsah* 1:12; Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 1:34; *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* 3:202; *Tārīkh Abi'l-Fidā'* 1:156; *Tārīkh al-Yaʿqūbī* 2:105; Abū-ʿUbayd, *al-Amwāl*, pp. 131; al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj al-Dhahab* 1:414; ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ ʿAbd al-Maqṣūd, *al-Imām ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib* 1:213; ʿUmar Riḍā Kaḥḥālah, *Aʿlām al-Nisā'* 3:205.

> I am more qualified for this position than you are. I never pay homage to you; rather, you must pay homage to me. You have confiscated this affair (i.e. caliphate) from the Anṣār and argued against them on the basis of your proximity to the Prophet, while you have usurped it from us, the Ahl al-Bayt. Did you not claim to the Anṣār that you are more eligible than they are in this matter, because Muḥammad belonged to you in family relation? They therefore surrendered the leadership to you and entrusted the command to you. Now, I present the same argument against you. We are the closer to the Prophet in his lifetime and after his death. So, act justly towards us if you have faith; otherwise, you may continue in oppression while you know that it is wrong..."

By providing these brilliant arguments, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) presented the same claim (namely, the closeness to the Holy Prophet) that the Muhājirūn had used in their argumentation against the Anṣār and could overcome them. In fact, the most qualified in the matter of caliphate according to this claim was Imam ʿAlī (ʿa). He argued that he was the closest in family relation to the Holy Prophet, because he was his cousin, son-in-law, and father of his two grandsons and his position to the Holy Prophet was as same as Prophet Aaron's position to Prophet Moses.

ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, although he had no reply to the statement of the Imam, stood up from his place and spoke up angrily, "You shall not be released until you pay allegiance."

"What if I refuse?" said Imam ʿAlī (ʿa).

"Then, we will behead you!" ʿUmar answered.

Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) looked around him and could not find any supporter to resort to; he therefore said in a sad tone, "If you do, you will kill a servant of Allah and a brother of His Messenger."

Losing all his nerves, ʿUmar said, "Yes, you are a servant of Allah. But no, you are not the brother of His Messenger."

Forgetting that Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was always the brother of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and the door to his city of knowledge, ʿUmar turned to Abū-Bakr urging him to impose punishment on the Imam (ʿa). He thus said, "Will you not make a decision against him?"

Abū-Bakr, anticipating rebellion and sedition, answered, "I cannot force him to do anything as long as Fāṭimah is to his side."

Abū-ʿUbaydah, one of the most prominent supporters of Abū-Bakr, looked at the Imam (ʿa) and, trying to cool the flames of revolt and to make peace with him, said, "O cousin! You are still young while they are elders of the community. You do not posses the same experience and understanding they have. I do not see Abū-Bakr but that, in this matter, he is stronger than you are. He has patience and ability to run the affairs of caliphate. So, leave this matter for Abū-Bakr, because if you are alive, you shall one day be the most qualified for this post from the aspects of superiority, faith, knowledge, understanding, precedence and kinship…"[1]

In his words, Abū-ʿUbaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ, justifying the precedence of Abū-Bakr over Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) in holding the position of leadership, used the argument that Abū-Bakr was older than the Imam; therefore, he must have enjoyed more accurate conception about the political affairs.

This deceptive and fraudulent manner aggrieved Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) more. He thus spoke to and preached the Muhājirūn saying,

> For the sake of Allah, O Muhājirūn! Let the power of Muḥammad among the Arabs not be taken away from its abode and center; and do not distance the Ahl al-Bayt from their rights among the people and their actual position... By Allah, O Muhājirūn! We are the worthiest of all people of this position, because we are the Prophet's Household, and in this matter, we are more qualified than you are. We, the Ahl al-Bayt, were always the best reciters of the Book of Allah, the most versed in the laws of the religion of Allah, the most knowledgeable with the traditions of Allah's Messenger, the most conversant with the affairs of the subjects, their defenders against all harmful things, and the distributors among them with equity. By Allah, this matter is exclusively ours. So, do not follow the selfish desires lest you will stray off from the path of Allah and you shall then increasingly deviate from the truth.[2]

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[1] Ibn Qutaybah, *al-Imāmah wa'l-Siyāsah* 1:11.

[2] Ibid. 1:12.

Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), in the previously mentioned words, preview the qualifications of leadership that the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) other than anyone else enjoyed, such as familiarity with the laws of the religion, knowledgeability with the Holy Prophet's traditions, and assuming the affairs of the subjects fairly and competently, as well as other qualifications that must be enjoyed by one who assumes the position of leading the Muslim community. In fact, these qualifications were enjoyed by the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) alone.

If the people had replied positively to the call of the Imam, it would have been a guarantee for their wellbeing and protection from deviation and going astray in the field of faith and other fields. The Imam (ʿa) would also have saved the nation from many evil consequences. However, since a long time, people have been going towards greed and fulfillment of selfish desires and sacrificing everything for this.

Anyway, the people did not pay any heed to the Imam's logic; they considered their material gains superior over everything else.

Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā'

Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa) is the doyenne of the women of the world and the only part of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) that remained after his departure. Almighty Allah is pleased when she is pleased, and is wrathful when she is angered. Her father (ṣ) used to take an exceptional interest in his daughter and declared her to be the superior to all the women of the world.

She opposed strictly the party of Quraysh who had determined to turn aside Imam ʿAlī (ṣ) from caliphate, declaring their poisonous slogan, "Prophethood and caliphate should never come together in the same family."[1]

She thus exerted all efforts to give back the right to its center that her father (ṣ) had planned in order to save his community from deviation and falling in the abysmal warrens of life. However, these people neglected her standing and returned to their former ignorance, committing against her forbidden offenses and forsaking her position to the Holy Prophet (ṣ)—a position that gives her immunity against error as long as her pleasure was part of the Lord's pleasure and her anger part of His anger.

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[1] Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 12:9.

Let us now refer to some situations of Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) with those usurpers:

Lady Fāṭimah's Strict Protest

In her protestation against Abū-Bakr and his group, Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa) provided overwhelming points of evidence, demonstrating that they had diverged from the line of true guidance that her father (ṣ) had sketched for his community when he assigned the next leader who would guide the people to the truth; namely, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa).

She also proved Imam ʿAlī's priority to hold the position of the next leadership and denounced these people for eliminating the Imam from this position, threatening that they would certainly encounter bad consequences as a result of this situation of them. She thus said,

> Woe unto them! Whereto did they move it from the position of the mission, the bases of Prophethood and the place of descent of Gabriel the Honest Spirit? Verily, he (i.e. Imam ʿAlī) is aware of life and religion's affairs. That was the great loss. What did they deny from Abu'l-Ḥasan (ʿAlī)? Yes, by God! They denied the strikes of his sword, his carelessness about death, his deadly assaults, and his anger for the sake of Allah. By Allah, if they turned away from the rein, which the Prophet had handed over to him (i.e. to Imam ʿAlī), he would catch it tenderly and he would move without harm or worry. He would lead them to a fresh flowing fount and would return them with satiety while he himself would not profit of anything but a little just to break his acute thirst and hunger. If they did so, they would be granted blessings from the Heaven and the earth and they would be rewarded by Allah according to their deeds. Come on to see! As long as you live, time shall show you wonders! I wish I knew on what proof they have relied, to what refuge they resorted and to what tie they clung, and on whose progeny have they encroached and spoke against! Evil indeed is the patron, and evil indeed is the associate, and evil indeed is this change for the unjust! By Allah, they exchanged the good with the bad and the daring with impotent. Disgrace be for a people, who think they do well. Surely, they themselves are the mischief-makers, but they do not perceive. Woe to them! "Is he then who guides to the truth more worthy to be followed, or he who himself does not go aright unless he is guided? What then is the matter with you; how do you judge? (10:35)"[1]

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[1] Ibn Ṭayfūr, *Balāghāt al-Nisā'*, pp. 23; ʿUmar Riḍā Kaḥḥālah, *A'lām al-Nisā'* 3:219-20.

Careful Meditation on Lady Fāṭimah's Speech

It seems necessary to meditate, yet briefly, on Lady Fāṭimah's previous words. In her speech, Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa) condemned the paying of homage to Abū-Bakr, declaring such homage as alienation from the Holy Prophet's Household. She (ʿa) also pointed out very serious issues, some of which will be mentioned in the following points:

First: Referring to the reasons for which these people turned away from giving Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) his right to hold the position of leadership after the Holy Prophet (ṣ), Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa) pointed out some peculiar characteristics of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), as follows:

1. The Imam's sword harvested the heads of the chiefs of Quraysh and thus created in their hearts malice and hatred towards him.

2. The Imam (ʿa) never flattered anybody at the expense of the truth. He never cared for any blame or criticism as long as he followed the truth. In this respect, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) is reported to have said,

> O people, support me despite your heart's desires. By Allah, I will take revenge for the oppressed from the oppressor and will put a string in the nose of the oppressor and drag him to the spring of truthfulness even though he may grudge it.[1]

On another occasion, he, expressing his inseparability from the truth, said,

> Verily, the truth has left me friendless.

3. The Imam (ʿa) dedicated his entire life to pleasing Almighty Allah; he therefore did not take into consideration any point other than the pleasure of Almighty Allah, even if the opposing party was a close relative.

Second: Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa) then exposed some features of Imam ʿAlī's government if only he had held his natural position of leading the Muslim community. Some of these features are as follows:

1. Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) would have governed their affairs with perfect justice and would have ruled according to the laws of Almighty Allah.

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[1] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon No. 135.

2. He would have led the people to a luxurious life, security, and peace. He would have distributed the fortunes of Almighty Allah among all people extremely equally and would never have preferred some people to others. In conclusion, under the shadow of the Imam's rule, all aspects of misery, poverty, and deprivation would have faded away.

3. He would have acted sincerely towards them and guided them to the best of all affairs.

4. He would have refused to benefit from any worldly pleasure and to take for himself the least amount of their financial dues.

In fact, when power came to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), he lived as simply as possible; he had no more than one garment and ate no more than one simple meal. He lived the life of the most miserable citizens. In this respect, he is reported to have said,

> Shall I be content with being called Amīr al-Mu'minīn (The Commander of the Believers), although I do not share with the people the hardships of the world? Or shall I be an example for them in the distresses of life? I have not been created to keep myself busy in eating good foods like the tied animal whose only worry is his fodder or like a loose animal whose activity is to swallow. It fills its belly with its feed and forgets the purpose behind it. Shall I be left uncontrolled to pasture freely, or draw the rope of misguidance or roam aimlessly in the paths of bewilderment?[1]

5. The fortunes and blessings of Almighty Allah would have covered the entire globe and people would have found no hunger and no destitution if Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) had been allowed to hold his natural position of succeeding the Holy Prophet (ṣ) in leading the Muslim community. Unfortunately, the Muslims deprived themselves of all of these fortunes and brought about persecution and discrepancy to themselves.

Third: Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa) predicted that the Muslim community would suffer very much and encounter various sorts of ordeals and hardship as a result of their eliminating Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) from leadership. She thus foretold that (1) seditious matters would blacken the

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[1] *Ibid.* Letter No. 45.

atmospheres of the Muslim community thus disuniting them, (2) the ruling authorities would act towards them tyrannically, and (3) the wrongdoers would manage them dictatorially.

In fact, all these predictions came true, especially after Muʿāwiyah came to power. He tortured and exhausted the Muslims, gave a free hand to such criminals like Samarah ibn Jundub, al-Maghīrah ibn Shuʿbah, Ziyād ibn Abīh, and Busr ibn Arṭa'ah to persecute the people. In the reign of Muʿāwiyah, fear spread, people were sentenced to various sorts of punishment, many eyes were gouged out, many bodies were crucified on the trunks of date-palm trees, and many hearts were pulled out.

More terribly, when Yazīd came to power, horrible crimes were committed; he massacred the Holy Prophet's family, attacked al-Madīnah and violated its people's sanctities, and demolished and destroyed by fire the Holy Kaʿbah.

All these and more were the result of eliminating Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) from holding the position of leadership.

SORROWFUL PROCEDURES

Abū-Bakr decided that dreadful procedures should be taken against the Holy Prophet's Household, because the members of this household formed the greatest danger on his government. He aimed at injuring Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa) exclusively; therefore, he treated her so repugnantly, causing her to encounter horrible matters, some of which will be mentioned hereinafter:

THREATENING WITH SETTING FĀṬIMAH'S HOUSE ON FIRE

Historicists and narrators of Prophetic traditions have indisputably agreed that Abū-Bakr and his gang threatened to set Lady Fāṭimah's house on fire. Let us now quote the reports of some of these historicists and narrators:

Al-Ṭabarī has reported that ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb came to ʿAlī's house where there Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr, and other men from the Muhājirūn, and said, "By Allah, I will burn you if you refuse to come out and pay homage." Unsheathing his sword, al-Zubayr came out in a hurry to face ʿUmar, but he stumbled and his sword fell down from his hand. The group of ʿUmar jumped on him and took that sword.[1]

Ibn ʿAbd-***Rabbih al-Andalusī*** says: The group that absented themselves from pledging allegiance to Abū-Bakr included ʿAlī, al-ʿAbbās, al-Zubayr, and Saʿd ibn ʿAbādah. As for the first three persons, they sat at Fāṭimah's house until Abū-Bakr sent ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb to make them leave the house. Abū-Bakr added, "If they refuse to come out, then you should fight them." Carrying a firebrand in his hand, ʿUmar intended to set the house and them on fire. When he came, Fāṭimah faced him and said, "O son of al-Khaṭṭāb! Have you come to set our house on fire?" He answered, "Yes, I will do unless you accept what the community has accepted."[2]

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[1] *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* 3:198.

[2] Ibn ʿAbd-Rabbih al-Andalusī, *al-ʿIqd al-Farīd* 5:12.

Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd states: ʿUmar, accompanying men from the Anṣār and a few others from the Muhājirūn, came to Fāṭimah's house and said, "I swear by Him Who grasps ʿUmar's soul in His hand, if you will not now come out to swear allegiance, I will most surely set this house and you on fire."[1]

Al-Shahristānī reports al-Naẓẓām as saying: On that event, ʿUmar was shouting, "Burn her house along with all those who are therein." In fact, none was in that house save ʿAlī, Fāṭimah, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn.[2]

ʿUmar Riḍā Kaḥḥālah says: Abū-Bakr then asked for some people who had failed to pay homage to him and he knew that they—namely, al-ʿAbbās, al-Zubayr, and Saʿd ibn ʿAbādah—were with ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib at Fāṭimah's house. Hence, Abū-Bakr sent ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb who came to them and called on them to come out. When they refused, he ordered firewood to be fetched. He thus said, "I swear by Him Who grasps ʿUmar's soul in His hand, if you will not now come out, I will most surely set this house and you on fire." Some people said to him, "Fāṭimah is there in that house!" He answered, "So what?"[3]

Al-Masʿūdī has mentioned that immediately after the passing away of Allah's Messenger, al-ʿAbbās joined Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) to stay with him in his house along with other followers, according to the instructions of the Holy Prophet (ṣ). However, these people came to ʿAlī's house, raided on him, set fire on the door of the house, took ʿAlī forcibly out of the house, and pressed Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) between the door and the wall so violently.[4]

In the previous lines, I have mentioned the names of some historicists who have referred to this sorrowful event when the inviolability of Allah's Messenger with regard to his daughter was violated. These people who committed this unforgivable offense failed to know that the house that they were attacking was the same house of Prophethood wherefrom the word of monotheism was launched to spread over the

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[1] Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 1:124.

[2] Al-Shahristānī, *al-Milal wa'l-Niḥal* 1:56.

[3] ʿUmar Riḍā Kaḥḥālah, *Aʿlām al-Nisāʾ* 4:114.

[4] Al-Masʿūdī, *Ithbāt al-Waṣiyyah*, pp. 123.

entire world. At the door of the same house, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) used to stop for six months to repeat this holy verse:

> Indeed, Allah desires to repel all impurity from you, o people of the household, and purify you with a thorough purification. (33/33)

The Gang that Raided on Lady Fāṭimah's House

In his raid on the Holy Prophet's Household, ʿUmar sought the help of the following wicked persons:

1. ***Usayd ibn Ḥuḍayr***: This man carried firewood to set to fire the house of Prophethood and the center of the Divine Revelation and knowledge in Islam.[1]

2. ***Muḥammad ibn Maslamah al-Khazrajī***: Contributing to the offensive process of setting Lady Fāṭimah's house on fire, this infidel was known for his extreme animosity towards Imam ʿAlī (ʿa). In the reign of the Imam (ʿa), this man joined the Khawārij (a faction whose members were described by the Holy Prophet as apostates).[2]

3. ***Al-Maghīrah ibn Shuʿbah***: One of the heads of hypocrisy and deviation, al-Maghīrah participated in the aggressive process of burning the Holy Household's house and encroaching upon Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa).[3]

4. ***Qunfudh***: His full name is Qunfudh ibn ʿUmayr al-Tamīmī. This slave of Abū-Bakr hit Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) with a whip and contributed to burning her house. ʿUmar, during his reign, respected this man very much. When ʿUmar took the half of the fortunes of his deputy governors after they had been accused of embezzling and robbing the public funds of Muslims, he exempted Qunfudh, as a sign of gratitude for his contributions to the process of pledging of allegiance to Abū-Bakr.

5. ***Bashīr ibn Saʿd al-Khazrajī***: This man also participated in the offensive raid on Lady Fāṭimah's house. He was known for his deviation from Imam ʿAlī (ʿa). His son, al-Nuʿmān, was appointed as the deputy governor of al-Kūfah in the reign of Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiyah.

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[1] Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 6:47.

[2] Ibn Kathīr, *al-Iṣābah fī Tamyīz al-Ṣaḥābah* 3:383.

[3] Sulaym ibn Qays, *al-Saqīfah*, pp. 134.

These persons raided on Lady Fāṭimah's house under the leadership of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and by the command of Abū-Bakr.

Abū-Bakr's Regret

In later times, Abū-Bakr felt terribly sorry for the offensive raid on Lady Fāṭimah's house that he had commanded. In his final ailment, he said, "I do not regret anything of this world except for three things that I had committed. Now, I wish I had not committed these things." Expressing one of these three offenses, Abū-Bakr said, "I wish I had not attacked Fāṭimah's house, no matter what the reason was."[1]

On another occasion, Abū-Bakr said, "I do not regret anything except three things that I wish I had not done. I wish I had not attacked Fāṭimah's house; rather, I should have left this issue even if it would lead to a war."[2]

After the aggressive attack on Lady Fāṭimah's house, Abū-Bakr lived in a state of insecurity and restlessness. This event did not stop annoying him and causing him ceaseless sorrow and sadness to the last breaths of his life.

ABORTING LADY FĀṬIMAH'S FETUS

Among all the consequences that accompanied the offensive raid on Lady Fāṭimah's house, the most excruciating event for every Muslim was the aborting of her fetus that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had given the name: Muḥsin. Reporters of Prophetic traditions have unanimously mentioned this event. Let us now refer to some of them:

Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, mentioning the biography of Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Sarrī ibn Yaḥyā ibn Dārim, says, "Known as Abū-Bakr al-Kūfī, this man was experienced in the traditions of the Holy Prophet (ṣ). Having mentioned the date of the death of this man, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Kūfī says, "Throughout his lifetime, the man was in the right position (i.e. regarding his beliefs). However, in the last of his lifetime, he very often mentioned the defects of some ancestors. I was present when a man was reading before him this report: ʿUmar kicked Fāṭimah so heavily that he caused her to abort her fetus Muḥsin."[3]

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[1] *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* 2:619; al-Dhahabī, *Mīzān al-Iʿtidāl* 2:215; al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 5:631.

[2] Ibn Ḥajar, *Lisān al-Mīzān* 4:189.

[3] Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Lisān al-Mīzān* 1:268.

Al-Shahristānī has reported on the authority of Ibrāhīm ibn Sayyār that ʿUmar hit Fāṭimah so violently, causing her to have an abortion of the fetus that was in her womb. He then shouted repeatedly, "Burn her house including those who are therein!"[1]

Al-Masʿūdī, referring to the incident involved, says, "They pressed the Doyenne of Women behind the door, causing her to miscarry Muḥsin."[2]

Al-Dhahabī has reported through his own chain of authority that Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥammād al-Kūfī said, "…I was present when a man was reading before him this report: ʿUmar kicked Fāṭimah so heavily that she aborted her fetus Muḥsin.'"[3]

Ibn Qutaybah says, "Muḥsin died because of the pressure of Qunfudh al-ʿAdawī."[4]

Al-Ṣafadī says that ʿUmar struck the belly of Fāṭimah on that day of the homage, causing her to abort al-Muḥsin.[5]

Al-Ṭabrisī, recording Imam al-Ḥasan's protest against a gang of the enemies of the Ahl al-Bayt among whom was al-Maghīrah ibn Shuʿbah, quotes the following words of Imam al-Ḥasan (ʿa):

> What are you, O Maghīrah? You are definitely an enemy of Allah; you abandon His Book and give the lie to His Prophet. You are also a notorious adulterer and you must undergo stoning (i.e. the religious punishment of those who are proved to have committed adultery). Moreover, it is you who hit Fāṭimah the daughter of Allah's Messenger, causing her to bleed. As a result, she miscarried what she had carried in her womb. You have done all that because you only intended to humiliate Allah's Messenger, to infringe his orders, and to violate his inviolabilities. Allah's Messenger had said to Fāṭimah, "You are the doyenne of the women of Paradise." Unquestionably, Allah shall make your course towards Hellfire straightly and shall impose upon you the bad consequences of what you have said.[6]

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[1] Al-Shahristānī, *al-Milal wa'l-Niḥal* 1:57.
[2] Al-Masʿūdī, *Ithbāt al-Waṣiyyah*, pp. 143.
[3] Al-Dhahabī, *Mīzān al-Iʿtidāl* 1:139.
[4] *Manāqib Āli Abī-Ṭālib* 3:358.
[5] Al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfī bi'l-Wafiyyāt* 5:347.
[6] Al-Ṭabrisī, *al-Iḥtijāj* 1:413.

Al-Majlisī, in his book entitled *Irshād al-Qulūb*, has reported through his chain of authority that Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) had said,

> ʿUmar took the whip from the hand of Qunfudh, the slave of Abū-Bakr, and lashed my upper arm. The whip twisted on my upper arm like a bracelet. He then kicked the door with his foot and pressed me behind it while I was pregnant. So, I fell to the ground on my face while fire was flaming and scorching my face. He then slapped me with the palm of his hand so violently that my earring dispersed away from my ear. At these moments, the throes of childbirth came to me, causing me to abort Muḥsin, who was killed without any crime he might have committed.[1]

In the previous lines, I have mentioned only few reference books that have recorded the details of the aggression of these people against the Holy Prophet's daughter, causing her to abort al-Muḥsin. Besides, many other more detailing reports have been reported from the Holy Imams (ʿa) on this topic.

ABROGATION OF THE KHUMS TAX

Among the cruel procedures that Abū-Bakr took against the Holy Prophet's Household was that he prevented them from receiving their share of the Khums (one-fifth) religious tax, which is decided for them exclusively in the Holy Qur'ān that reads,

> And know that whatever thing you gain, a fifth of it is for Allah and for the Apostle and for the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer, if you believe in Allah and in that which We revealed to Our servant, on the day of distinction, the day on which the two parties met; and Allah has power over all things. (8/41)"

All historicists and narrators have unanimously agreed that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) specified a share of the Khums tax for himself and his relatives and this practice continued up to the last hour of his lifetime. When Abū-Bakr came to power, he abrogated the share of the Prophet as well as that of his relatives and deprived Banū-Hāshim of this, making them equal to ordinary populace.[2]

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[1] ʿAllāmah al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār* 30:348-9.
[2] Al-Zamakhsharī, *Tafsīr al-Kashshāf* 2:583.

Lady Fāṭimah the daughter of the Holy Prophet sent a message to Abū-Bakr to give her the rest of the Khums of Khaybar, but he refused to pay her anything.[1] Thus, poverty hovered over the family of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and they were deprived of the most important financial source that Almighty Allah had specified for them.

Probably, by this procedure, Abū-Bakr intended to deprive Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) of any financial resource that would help him dispute with Abū-Bakr on the position of leadership. Such procedure is a sort of economical siege that some states impose on their rivals.

CONFISCATION OF FADAK

Another cruel procedure that Abū-Bakr made against Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa) was that he confiscated the land of Fadak and put it under State ownership.

Geographic Site of Fadak

Fadak is a village that is situated between Ḥijāz and al-Madīnah. It had belonged to the Jews; so, it was close to the town of Khaybar.[2]

Fadak; The Holy Prophet's Ownership

The village of Fadak was not conquered by any military force; rather, it was one of the properties that Almighty Allah conferred on His Prophet in the seventh year after Hegira. Hence, it was not within the properties that were militarily occupied, since the Khums tax is subjected to such lands only. As a result, Fadak was purely the Holy Prophet's ownership.

The Holy Prophet Gifted Fadak to Lady Fāṭimah

When Fadak became a personal property of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), this holy Qur'ānic verse was revealed to him:

> And give to the near of kin his due. (17/26)

Hence, he transferred the ownership of Fadak and al-ʿAwālī to Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa), saying to her,

> This is one of the shares that Allah has decided to be for you and your descendants.[3]

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* 3:36; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 2:72.
[2] Al-Ṭurayḥī, *Majmaʿ al-Baḥrayn* 5:283.
[3] Al-Ḥākim al-Ḥasakānī, *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl wa Qawāʿid al-Tafḍīl* 1:441; Jalāl-al-

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The land was thus in the possession and use of Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa); and the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) did not have any other economical resource. In this regard, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) says,

> Of course, all that we had in our possession under this sky was Fadak.[1]

When Abū-Bakr assumed power, he evicted Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) from the possession of the land and the garden thereon and included them with the public treasury. This procedure of confiscation was intended to deprive Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) of any financial power due to which he might demand with his right, which was usurped by Abū-Bakr.

It is worth mentioning that Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, once, asked his mentor ʿAlī ibn al-Fāriqī, "Was Fāṭimah truthful when she demanded with Fadak?"

"Yes, she was," answered the mentor.

Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd asked, "Then, why did Abū-Bakr refuse to give her Fadak while she was truthful?"

The mentor answered, "If Abū-Bakr gave her Fadak, she would return the next day and demand with the right of her husband in the position held by Abū-Bakr. If she did, Abū-Bakr would not have any answer, because he had already recognized her as truthful in whatever she claims, without need for testimonies, oaths, and the like!"[2]

At any rate, the ruling authorities that came after the reign of Abū-Bakr acted playfully in this land according to their own fancies. ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān, the chief of the Umayyads, gifted it to Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam, and that was one of the reasons that flared up popular revolt against him.[3] When Muʿāwiyah ibn Abī-Sufyān came to power, he took Fadak under his control and left a third of it in the use of Marwān, gave a third to ʿUmar ibn ʿUthmān and the remaining portion to his own son ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz. When ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz came to power, he took it from the descendants of Marwān and gave it back as alms.[4]

Dīn al-Suyūṭi: *al-Durr al-Manthūr* 2:151; al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 2:158; al-Ālūsī, *Rūḥ al-Maʿānī* 5:58.

[1] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Epistle No. 45.

[2] Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 1:198.

[3] Ibn ʿAbd-Rabbih al-Andalusī, *al-ʿIqd al-Farīd* 4:283.

[4] *Tārīkh Abi'l-Fidā'* 1:168.

Lady Fāṭimah Demands with Fadak

Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) went to Abū-Bakr and demanded that he should give Fadak back to her. Abū-Bakr asked her to provide witnesses who should testify that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had given her Fadak as gift. She thus provided witnesses among whom were Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and Ummu-Ayman the virtuous lady about whom the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had said, "She is one of the people of Paradise."

So, Abū-Bakr, in the beginning, wrote a formal document that carried his order to allow Lady Fāṭimah to regain Fadak. However, ʿUmar took the written document, spit in it, and tore it into pieces.[1]

Other historicists have mentioned that Abū-Bakr did not accept the testimony of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), claiming that it was for the benefit of him that Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) would take Fadak as personal ownership. He also rejected Ummu-Ayman's testimony, claiming that she was a non-Arab lady who could not understand the issue clearly enough.

Commenting on this event, some Shīʿite theologians have provided many points of protest, two of which will be cited hereinafter:

First: Abū-Bakr asked Lady Fāṭimah the doyenne of the women of the world to provide evidence that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had gifted the village of Fadak to her as purely personal ownership. One of the general rules of the Muslim jurisprudence reads that evidence must be made by the plaintiff while a defendant is required to take an oath. By applying this rule to this issue, Abū-Bakr was the plaintiff; therefore, he should have provided evidence, and in case he did not have any, he was required to take an oath no more.

Second: Abū-Bakr neglected the exceptional standing of Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa); she was the doyenne of the women of the Muslim community at least, the daughter of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), the one whose pleasure is part of Almighty Allah's pleasure and whose wrath is part of His wrath, and the one the love for whom was a duty incumbent upon all Muslims according to this holy Qur'ānic verse:

> Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives. And whoever earns good, We give him more of good therein. Surely, Allah is Forgiving, Grateful. (42/23)

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[1] Al-Ṭabrisī, *al-Iḥtijāj* 1:12.

However, as signs of their love for Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa), these people caused her to have an abortion and raided on her house! How terrible their deeds were!

In brief, Abū-Bakr confiscated the village of Fadak and brought it under the state ownership.

Disappointed and distressed, Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) left Abū-Bakr surrounded by sorrow and sadness.

If truth be told, Abū-Bakr should have at least regarded Lady Fāṭimah's emotions as a sort of honoring the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and appreciating the situation of Lady Khadījah, the mother of Lady Fāṭimah, who had sacrificed her entire fortune for Islam while she was the richest of all the people of Quraysh.

Sayyid ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn, commenting on this point, says,

> Had Abū-Bakr at least avoided frustrating Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa) in her situations as possible as he could with all means of wisdom! Had he only done so, it would have been much better for him with regard to his end result, it would have kept him away from regret, he would have kept himself away from blame, and the issue would have worked more properly towards uniting the Muslim community in general and towards presenting him as a better leader in particular.
>
> He could have protected the trust of the Prophet (ṣ) and the only daughter of him; namely, Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa), against being disappointed and he could have saved her from leaving him while she was stumbling by her garment. What would he have lost if he had acted as her father and given Fadak to her without a trial? A leader of the Muslim community can do whatever he likes according to his general authority over all Muslims. Besides, if Fadak had been sacrificed for the sake of achieving a public interest and warding off the cause of corruption, this would have been more precious than the material value of the land of Fadak.[1]

Abū-Bakr could have done a favor and decided to keep the personal ownership of Fadak in the hands of the Holy Prophet's daughter instead

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[1] Sayyid ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn, *al-Naṣṣ wa'l-Ijtihād*, pp. 37.

of facing her with such cruelty whose prints will never be erased from the hearts of the true believers.

Lady Fāṭimah's Historic Speech

The world became straitened for the beloved daughter of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and the steps that Abū-Bakr had initiated to impose economic restrictions on her family and her had made the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) financially incapable. As a result, Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) decided to provide her points of evidence before Abū-Bakr in order to put him under clear argument, burden him with the responsibility for what had happened against her, and, at the same time, urge the Muslims to overthrow him.

I have not seen any other speech more dangerous than this one in such a sensitive situation. This speech was supposed to lead to a revolution and overthrowing of Abū-Bakr's rule. However, due to his tactfulness and diplomacy, Abū-Bakr could control the situation and save his rule from uprising.

According to narrators, Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa) became very angry; she therefore put on her veil, wrapped her garment around her body, and, accompanied by some of her female relatives and neighbors, walked majestically just like the stride of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) until she arrived in the presence of Abū-Bakr at a time when a number of people from the Muhājirūn, the Anṣār, and others were also present there.

A curtain was put between her and the attendants. She first sighed in grief and pain and then wept. The people thus began to weep due to her sad wailing, and turmoil began to be aroused in that gathering, because the attendants saw in her the character of her great father who had no other child except her and who led them to the prosperity in this world and the other world and because they all felt that they had been negligent with regard to their duties towards her and her husband.

She allowed the people respite that their wails would calm down and their tears would stop flowing. At that time, she commenced her address with words of praise and glorification of the Almighty and continued her sermon like flowing water in such a way that no one had heard a more eloquent and meaningful discourse although she was still young and no more than eighteen years old. However, she was the daughter of Allah's Messenger whom was endued with wisdom and clear judgment.

In her incomparable discourse, Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa) spoke on the philosophy of Islam and discussed the logics for the laws and the wisdom of Islamic rules and regulations. She described the condition of the people before the dawn of Islam that to what extent they were mired in oppressing each other, how backward they were in knowledge, and how ignorance dominated their minds, especially in the Arabian Peninsula, where they were targets of humiliation and were on the verge of the pit of fire, that every drinker used to derive enjoyment from them and every greedy one was eyeing and everyone who moved used to take advantage from them; and they were trampled under the feet of all those who walked so much so that they were in such terrible poverty that sometimes they had to satiate their hunger with carrion and quench their thirst with waste water. They were more and more arrested in those terrible circumstances, but through the Holy Prophet (ṣ), Almighty Allah bestowed them salvation and freedom, led them on the path of progress and development, and made the Prophet (ṣ) the leader of their community. How great the superiority and favors of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) were on the Arabs and on all people!

Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) then alluded to the merits of her cousin Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and his manifest struggle and efforts in defense of Islam against the enemies at a time when the Muslims of Quraysh (i.e. the Muhājirūn) spent a life of comfort and security and had no role in the propagation of Islam. Rather, as the Prophet (ṣ) has described, at the time of confrontation, they used to run away from the battlefields and they used to flee in horror.

Browse the reference books of the biography of the Holy Prophet (ṣ)! Can you find a single line mentioning any brave act mentioned for these Muslims of Quraysh? Can you find any situation in which they broke into a battlefield or fought bravely? In fact, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was the one and only star of all battles. Hence, the least we can describe him is to confess that he was the hero of Islam and the foremost warrior.

Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) also demonstrated that these Muslims of Quraysh did not stop waiting the befalling of misfortunes upon the Holy Prophet's Household, plotting evil conspiracies against them, and wishing that they would be attacked by calamities.

In her sermon too, Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) expressed intense regret at the changed circumstances and the deviation of Muslims and their falling into the lure of selfish desires and pride. She predicted that they would be the victims of terrible events and calamities due to their sins and deviations from what the Almighty had prescribed for them; that is, to be always attached to the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa). After she had spoken on these matters, she indicated towards her inheritance that she was supposed to have received from her father but she had been deprived from it. She thus said,

> Yet, now you claim that there is not inheritance for us! What! "Do they then seek after a judgment of (the Days of) ignorance? But how, for a people whose faith is assured, can give better judgment than Allah?" Do you not know that I am his daughter? Yes, indeed it is as obvious to you as sunlight in midday.
>
> O Muslims! Will my inheritance be usurped? O son of Abū-Quḥāfah! Where is it in the Book of Allah that you inherit your father and I do not inherit mine? Surely, you have come up with an unprecedented thing. Do you intentionally abandon the Book of Allah and cast it behind your back? Do you not read where it says: "And Solomon inherited David"?
>
> And when it narrates the story of Zachariah, the Qur'ān says: "So, give me an heir as from thyself; one that will inherit me, and inherit the posterity of Jacob. And: "But kindred by hood have prior rights against each other in the Book of Allah."
>
> And: "Allah (thus) directs you as regards your children's (inheritance) to the male, a portion equal to that of two females." And: "If he leaves any goods, that he make a bequest to parents and next of kin, according to reasonable usage; this is due from the pious ones."
>
> You claim that I have no share and that I do not inherit my father! What! Did Allah reveal a (Qur'ānic) verse regarding you, from which He excluded my father? Or do you say: "These (i.e. Fāṭimah and her father) are the people of two different faiths; they do not inherit each other?!" Are we, my father and I, not adhering to one faith? Or is it that you have more knowledge about the specifications and generalizations of the Qur'ān than my father and my cousin (ʿAlī)?

In this section of her brilliantly styled sermon, Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa) provided the most authentic points of evidence all of which proved that she deservingly had the right to inherit from her father. Some of these points of evidence are as follows:

First: Just like all other people, the prophets are subjected to the laws of inheritance. Providing evidence, Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) referred to the issues of the prophets Solomon, David, and John the son Zachariah. Clearly, many holy Qur'ānic verses prove that all these prophets bequeathed and inherited, just like other people.

Second: Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) provided as more points of evidence the general holy Qur'ānic verses that demonstrated the laws of inheritance, proving that these laws are applicable to her father, too. Hence, to exclude him (ṣ) from these laws requires a special proof, which is nonexistent. Therefore, it becomes imperative to accept these holy verses according to their general meanings, which, in this case, are considered acceptable evidence.

Third: The exclusion from the laws of inheritance is applied only when the testator follows a religion different from the religion of the legatee, such as when the father is Muslim while the heir is not. Of course, this exclusion is inapplicable in the issue of the legacy of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) to his legatee Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa). On the contrary, both the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) are the essence of Islam. Accordingly, on which basis else was she prevented from inheriting her father?

Of course, these points of condemned Abū-Bakr who could not find any reply.

Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) then addressed Abū-Bakr with these words:

> So, here you are! Take it! (Ready with) its nose rope and saddled! But if shall encounter you on the Day of Gathering; (thus) what a wonderful judge is Allah, a claimant is Muḥammad, and a day is the Day of Rising. At the time of the Hour shall the wrongdoers lose and it shall not benefit you to regret (your actions) then! For every Message, there is a time limit and soon shall you know who will be inflicted with torture that will humiliate him and who will be confronted by an everlasting punishment.

The pictures of tongue-lashing in these words are really sharper than the edge of a sword! It was thus the fair trial that never misses any oppressive act against others.

Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) then turned towards the attendants stimulating their determinations to overthrow the rule of Abū-Bakr, saying,

> O you people of intellect, the strong supporters of the nation, and those who embraced Islam! What is this shortcoming in defending my right? What is this slumber (while you see) injustice (being done toward me)? Did not the Messenger of Allah, my father, used to say: 'A man is upheld (remembered) by his children?' How quick you have violated (his orders)! How soon you have plotted against us! But you still are capable (of helping me in) my attempt, and powerful (to help me) in that which I request and (in) my pursuit (of it). Or do you say: "Muhammad has perished!"
>
> Surely, this is a great calamity. Its damage is excessive, its injury is great, and its wound (is much too deep) to heal.
>
> The earth became darkened with his departure, the stars eclipsed for the calamity of losing him, hopes were seized, mountains submitted, sanctity was violated, and holiness was encroached upon after his death. Therefore, this, by Allah, is the great affliction and the grand calamity; there is not an affliction which is the like of it nor will there be a sudden misfortune (as surprising as this).
>
> The Book of Allah -excellent be praising Him- announced in the courtyards (of your houses) in the place where you spend your evenings and mornings; a call, a cry, a recitation, and (verses) in order. It has previously come upon His (Allah's) Prophets and Messengers; (for it is) a decree final and predestination fulfilled: "Muḥammad is not but an apostle: many were the apostles that passed away before him. If he died or he was slain, will you then turn back on your heels? If any did turn back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to Allah; but Allah (on the other hand) will swiftly reward those who (serve Him) with gratitude."

Addressing the Anṣār in particular and provoking them to remove Abū-Bakr from power, she (ʿa) said,

> O sons of Qīlah (i.e. the tribes of al-Aws and al-Khazjar who form the Anṣār)! Will I be usurped the inheritance of my father while you hear and see me and while you are sitting and gathered around me? You hear my call and you are included in the (news of the) affair! You are numerous and well equipped! (You have) the means and the power, and the weapons and the shields. Yet, the call

> reaches you but you do not answer; the cry comes to you but you do not come to help, while you are characterized by struggle, known for goodness and welfare, you are the selected group (which was chosen), and the best ones chosen by the Messenger for us, the Ahl al-Bayt. You fought the Arabs, bore with pain and exhaustion, struggled against the nations, and resisted their heroes. We were still, so were you in ordering you, and you in obeying us until Islam became triumphant, the accomplishment of the days came near, the fort of polytheism was subjected, the outburst of war was subjected, the outburst of infidelity calmed down, and the system of religion was well-ordered. Thus, (why have you) become confused after clearness, concealed matters after announcing them, turned on your heels after daring, and associated (others with Allah) after believing? Will you not fight people who violated their oaths, plotted to expel the Apostle and became aggressive by being the first (to assault) you? Do you fear them? Nay, it is Allah Whom you should more justly fear, if you believe!

When she realized the weakness and languor of the Anṣār, she became certain that they would not respond to her. So, she blamed them, saying,

> Nevertheless, I see that you are inclined to easy living, dismissed he who is more worthy of guardianship (i.e. ʿAlī), and secluded yourselves with meekness and dismissed that which you accepted. Yet, if you show ingratitude; you and all on earth together, yet, Allah is free of all wants, worthy of all praise. Surely, I have said all that I have said with full knowledge that you intent to forsake me, and knowing the betrayal that your hearts sensed. But it is the state of soul, the effusion of fury, the dissemination of (what is in) the chest and the presentation of the proof. Hence, here it is! Bag it (leadership and) put it on the back of an ill she-camel, which has a thin hump with everlasting grace, marked with the wrath of Allah, and the blame of ever (which leads to) the Fire of (the wrath of Allah kindled (to a blaze), that which does mount (right) to the hearts, for Allah witnesses what you do and soon will the unjust assailants know what vicissitudes their affairs will take! And I am the daughter of a warner (i.e. the Prophet) to you against a severe punishment. So, act and so will we, and wait, and we shall wait.[1]

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[1] Ibn Ṭayfūr, *Balāghāt al-Nisā'*, pp. 12-9; ʿUmar Riḍā Kaḥḥālah, *A'lām al-Nisā'*

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This was the sealing section of Lady Fāṭimah's igneous speech that expressed her greatness and the scope of her scientific faculties, which are only the extension of the knowledge of her father (ṣ) who had caused fountains of knowledge and wisdom to gush forth from the earth.

Hearts began to burn, eyes opened wide, and people began to feel suffocated as life went away then came back so that the air which had gone should come back and truth was about to be re-established. However, Abū-Bakr was well known for his quick tongue and power of diplomacy. He was able to regain control over the situation and he saved his government from a revolution. He expressed utmost honor and respect for the beloved daughter of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) as if he had more regard for her than his daughter ʿĀ'ishah. From the depths of his being, he seemed to hold her in reverence. He also expressed a deep grief for the passing away of her dear father the Holy Prophet (ṣ) while he had actually wished the Prophet had died before that time. He said that he had not initiated these steps on his own and had not obtained the seat of rulership of his own. It was actually the choice of the majority and consensus the people!

However, the truth is that Muslims had nothing to do with this. The most prominent Muslim personalities did not pay homage to Abū-Bakr, the majority of the Anṣār detested pledging allegiance to him—the allegiance that was slip, as his assistant ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb had expressed.

Lady Fāṭimah Complains to Her Father

Immediately after that situation, Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) went to the grave of her father to complain to him about the calamities that she had to encounter at the hands of these people. She thus said these poetic verses:

There were after you conflicting news and misfortunes.

3:208; Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 16:210; ʿAllāmah al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār* 29:216.

In my book entitled *Ḥayāt al-Zahrā'* (the Biography of Lady Fāṭimah), I have quoted the entire speech with commentaries.

Some sections of the same speech are mentioned by Ibn Manẓūr in *Lisān al-ʿArab* 2:231, Ibn Kathīr, *al-Nihāyah fī Gharīb al-Ḥadīth* 4:273, and al-Masʿūdī in *Murūj al-Dhahab* 2:311.

If you had been here, misfortunes would not have been as many as they are now.

We have lost you as the earth loses its rain.

And your people turned upside down; come to witness them and do not keep away!

Some men showed us what there was hidden in their hearts, when you left and the grave kept you away from us.

Some men frowned at us and we were disparaged when you were lost, and the inheritance was plundered.

These poetic verses communicate the scope of Lady Fāṭimah's sorrow and deep grief for the misfortunes she had to suffer after the departure of her father from this world. In fact, these people treated her extremely cruelly and violently and they never respected their duty towards the Holy Prophet (ṣ), the first of which was that they were required to respect his family members.

LIGHTS ON IMAM 'ALĪ'S ATTITUDE

Many people wonder why Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) did not oppose Abū-Bakr and open a front against him, thus taking back his right forcibly rather than rejecting this procedure and secluding himself from all political affairs.

Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), answering such questions, provided some reasons that made him stop demanding with his right of holding the position of leadership. Some of these reasons are as follows:

Lack of Military Assistance

Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) did not have enough military power that might make the change and give him victory over his opponents. On many occasions, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) referred to this point. For instance, in his famous sermon known as *al-Shaqshaqiyyah*, the Imam (ʿa) says,

> Then I began to think whether I should assault or endure calmly the blinding darkness of tribulations wherein the grown up are made feeble and the young grow old and the true believer acts under strain until he meets Allah (on his death). I found that endurance thereon was wiser. So I adopted patience although there was pricking in the eye and suffocation (of mortification) in the throat. I watched the plundering of my inheritance.[1]

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[1] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon No. 3.

In this section, the Imam (ʿa) demonstrated that he did not have any power to lead a revolution, because he lacked any military assistance and he lacked any shelter that would help him fight against Abū-Bakr. He therefore had to "adopt patience although there was pricking in the eye and suffocation in the throat."

On another occasion, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), explaining the reason for not revolting against Abū-Bakr, said,

> I looked and found that there is no supporter for me except family, so I refrained from thrusting them unto death. I kept my eyes closed despite motes in them. I drank despite choking of throat. I exercised patience despite trouble in breathing and despite having to take sour colocynth as food.[1]

Except for his little family, none stopped with Imam ʿAlī (ʿa). If he had waged war against Abū-Bakr, he would certainly have lost it and lost his life, too, not to mention the catastrophic consequences that would befall the Muslim community.

The overwhelming majority paid homage to Abū-Bakr under the pressure of ʿUmar. Intending to put them under argument, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) led Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa) to the houses of the Muhājirūn and Anṣār, asking them for help and for rebelling against the ruling regime. However, they said to her, "O daughter of Allah's Messenger! We have already paid homage to this man." Refuting this claim, Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) answered,

> Will you then let the inheritance of Allah's Messenger leave his house to join other houses?

Making an unjustifiable apology, they said, "O daughter of Allah's Messenger, if only your husband offered this to us before Abū-Bakr had done, we would never accept anyone save him."

Here, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) answered them reproachfully,

> Was it possible for me to leave the body of Allah's Messenger unburied in his house and go out to quarrel these people about his authority?

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[1] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon No. 26.

Confirming the words of her husband, Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) said,

> Abu'l-Ḥasan did nothing but what he ought to do. They did what Allah shall certainly punish them for it.[1]

In short, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) did not have any military force to fight against Abū-Bakr. If he had had such, it would not have been legal for him to keep silent.

Lady Fāṭimah and Mu'ādh ibn Jabal

Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) then headed for Muʿādh ibn Jabal, a prominent Companion of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), and asked for his help, saying, "I have come to you asking for your support. You have sworn allegiance to Allah's Messenger and pledge that you would support his offspring and him and protect him as same as you protect your own family and yourself. Abū-Bakr has usurped Fadak from me and dismissed my deputy from that land."

Muʿādh asked, "Am I alone in this question or are there others with me?"

She (ʿa) answered, "No one has responded to me."

Muʿādh, refusing, said, "What can my support for you do and to which extent can it reach?"

Angrily, Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) said, "I shall never talk to you henceforth until I join Allah's Messenger."

Thus, Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) left Muʿādh disappointed and grief-stricken.

Muʿādh's honorable son then came and asked his father, "What for has the daughter of Muḥammad come?"

The father answered, "She has come asking for my support against Abū-Bakr."

The son asked, "What was your reply?"

The father said, "My support can do nothing as long as I am alone."

The son said, "So, you have refused to respond to her. Have you not?"

The father answered, "Yes, I have."

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[1] Ibn Qutaybah, *al-Imāmah wa'l-Siyāsah* 1:12.

The son, inquiring about her reaction, asked, "What did she say to you."

The father answered, "She said that she would never talk to me until she would join Allah's Messenger."

Stormed by anguish, the son said, "As for me, I, by Allah, shall never talk to you until I join Allah's Messenger if you insist on refusing to support his daughter."[1]

Maintaining Islam

By all means, if Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) had waged war against Abū-Bakr, a deathblow would have come to Islam to cause it eradication. The hypocrites, headed by Abū-Sufyān and the other polytheists of Quraysh whose heroes and chiefs were annihilated by Islam, were ceaselessly waiting for any opportunity to wipe out Islam and bring back the era of ignorance into life.

Another point is that the faith and principles of Islam had not been yet firmly established in the hearts and minds of many of those who claimed embracing Islam, because the majority of them entered this religion in their youth, middle age, or old age. The spirit of the pre-Islamic era of ignorance had been still nested in their hearts. When such a war would break out, they would most surely abandon their faiths and return to idolatry to worship their false deities.

Practically, the people of Quraysh, immediately after the passing away of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), made steps in Makkah towards abandoning the faith of Islam and returning to their previous false beliefs that they had followed for years before the advent of Islam.

In my conception, this was the strongest reason that made Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) keep silence and stop demanding with his right.

Maintaining the Unity of Muslims

Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) always cared for and worked towards maintaining unity among Muslims. He therefore had to keep peace with those men who usurped caliphate from him. Declaring this fact openly, the Imam (ʿa) said when people were determined to pay homage to ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān,

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[1] Shaykh al-Mufīd, *al-Ikhtiṣāṣ*, pp. 184.

> You have certainly known that I am the most rightful of all others for the Caliphate. By Allah, so long as the affairs of Muslims remain intact and there is no oppression in it save on myself I shall keep quiet seeking reward for it (from Allah) and keeping aloof from its attractions and allurements for which you aspire.[1]

In order to maintain the unity of Muslims and keep them on the same word, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) used peaceful terms with those people and curtained the harsh pains that he had felt in his inner self for the losing of his right.

The previous points have shed light on some reasons that made Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) keep silence and act patiently towards those who usurped his right to succeed the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and hold the religious and political leadership of the Muslim community.

UNJUSTIFIABLE APOLOGY

Abū-Bakr and his friend ʿUmar tried to gain Lady Fāṭimah's satisfaction as an attempt to give their government a sort of legality and to use her satisfaction with them as a means to gain the Muslims' satisfaction. They went to her house and asked permission to visit her, but she refused to receive them. Then, for another time, they tried to obtain her permission to visit her, but she again refused. They therefore went to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and asked him to intercede for them with her. When Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) did, Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) responded to his request and allowed Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar to visit her. When they came to her house, they greeted her, but she refused to respond. They then advanced a few steps forward and sat before her. She again turned her face away from them. They then insistently begged her to listen to their words. So, she permitted them to speak. Hence, they started begging her to forgive them and be pleased with them.

However, Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) said,

> I adjure you by Allah, did you not hear the Messenger of Allah saying, 'The pleasure of Fāṭimah is part of my pleasure and the displeasure of Fāṭimah is part of my displeasure. Whoever loves Fāṭimah my daughter, has loved me, whoever pleases Fāṭimah has pleased me, and whoever displeases Fāṭimah has displeased me?'

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[1] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon No. 73.

Giving credence to her words, they both answered that they had heard the Holy Prophet (ṣ) saying so.

She then raised her hands towards the heavens and said with sadness and wounded heart,

> I call Allah and His angels to bear witness for me that you both have displeased me and you both have never pleased me. Moreover, when I will meet the Messenger of Allah, I will definitely complain to him against you.

Lady Fāṭimah (ʿa) then addressed Abū-Bakr, saying,

> By Allah, I will invoke Allah's displeasure upon you in every prayer I will do.[1]

How heavy these words were! Indeed, they were heavier than the strikes of swords. The ground shook under the feet of these two men and rotated like a quern that they left her tottering for the horrible situation in which they had put themselves. They left Lady Fāṭimah's house with a great disappointment, since they understood how much the wrath that they had burdened themselves with was.

Lady Fāṭimah's Last Will

The commemoration of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) brought such severe illness to his daughter Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa) that her physique completely weakened in such a way that she did not have strength remaining in her to even get up from her bed. She was slowly withering away like a flower deprived of moisture, because death was approaching her quickly while

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[1] Ibn Qutaybah, *al-Imāmah wa'l-Siyāsah* 1:14; ʿUmar Riḍā Kaḥḥālah, *Aʿlām al-Nisā' 3:1214*; ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ ʿAbd al-Maqṣūd, *al-Imām ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib* 1:217.

The least thing Abū-Bakr should do at these moments was to weep and feel deeply sad, because he had missed the pleasure of Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (ʿa) whose pleasure would please Almighty Allah and whose displeasure would displease Him, just as her father had declared. (Al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 3:153; Ibn al-Athīr, *Usd al-Ghābah fi Maʻrifat al-Ṣaḥābah* 5:522; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb* 12:241; al-Dhahabī, *Mīzān al-Iʿtidāl* 2:72; al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-Ummah* 6:219; Aḥmad ibn ʻAbdullāh al-Ṭabarī, *Dhakhā'ir al-ʻUqbā fi Manāqib Dhawi'l-Qurbā*, pp. 39; al-Khawārizmī, *Maqtal a-Ṭālibiyyīn* 1:52.) [*Translator:* Quoted from Bāqir Sharīf al-Qarashī's book of *The Encyclopedia of Imam ʿAlī's Biography*]

she was yet in her early youth. Too nigh was the time of her meeting with her father who had separated from her and along with him were gone the affection and kindness he had showered her with.

It became obvious that she was soon to bid farewell to this world. She summoned her cousin Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and stated her bequest to him, which, among other points, expressed instructions that (1) her holy mortal remains should be consigned to the dust in the darkness of the night and none of those who had oppressed her be allowed to attend the funeral, because they were her enemies and the enemies of her father, as she expressed. (2) She willed that her grave would be concealed so that it would remain a symbol of her displeasure all over history.

About this point, a poet[1] composed these poetic verses:

O he who disputes with us about the usurpers who had usurped the right of Fāṭimah, tell us:
Is it true your claim that these two neither committed deliberately any act of wrongdoing against her nor did they make her unhappy?
If so, why was she at her death prepared to meet Allah while they were not allowed to be present there?
Her bier was seen off by the angels of the All-beneficent Lord as a sign of their leniency to her, while these two persons did not participate in that funeral ceremony.
Why did they not follow her? Was it because they belittled the Divine reward obtained from such an act, or was it on account of their stubbornness against her father?
Or was it because the chaste Fāṭimah had willed that these two should never witness her burial? Therefore, they were not allowed.
Or was it that her father had confidentially instructed her to do this; therefore, the Prophet's daughter obeyed her father?
Whatever you say! It will never justify! Your claim was indeed a forgery that you exceeded all limits when you said it!

Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), having assured that all her instructions should be carried out, left her while grief and sorrow covered him totally.

When she passed away, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), in the last hours of night, placed

[1] It is believed that the poet is one of the emirs of Makkah. (Reference: Al-Aḥmadī al-Miyānji, *Mawāqif al-Shīʿah* 3:258.)

the body in the grave and poured dust upon it. He stood beside the grave and tears flowed from his eyes with such propensity that the ground became wet with them. He uttered the following words describing his shock and grief:

> O Prophet of Allah, peace be upon you from me and from your daughter who has come to you and who has hastened to meet you. O Prophet of Allah, my patience about your chosen (daughter) has been exhausted, and my power of endurance has weakened, except that I have ground for consolation in having endured the great hardship and heart-rending event of your separation. I laid you down in your grave when your last breath had passed (when your head was) between my neck and chest.
>
> Verily, we belong to Allah; and to Him shall we return.
>
> Now, the trust has been returned and what had been given has been taken back. As to my grief, it knows no bounds, and as to my nights. They will remain sleepless until Allah chooses for me the house in which you are now residing.
>
> Certainly, your daughter would apprise you of the joining together of your people for oppressing her. You ask her in detail and get all the news about the position. This has happened when a long time had not elapsed and your remembrance had not disappeared. My salutation be on you both, the salutation of a grief stricken not a disgusted or hateful person; for if I go away it is not because I am weary (of you), and if I stay it is not due to lack of belief in what Allah has promised the steadfast.[1]

These statements are full of grief and deep sorrow and they complain to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) about the pains and afflictions that befell him because of the departure of the doyenne of the women of the world from this life, leaving him alone. Although the Imam (ʿa) used to stand the ordeals of this life, he declared that his patience reduced for this misfortune.

Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) also requested the Messenger of Allah (ṣ) to inquire from his daughter directly about the tortures she had to bear in the short period she lived after his passing away.

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[1] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon No. 201.

In the same way, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) announced his personal grief at the passing away of the Prophet's beloved daughter, because it was such a terrible tragedy for him that the flames of grief were never to cooled for him until he would meet the Lord.

This is the end of our discussion of Lady Fāṭimah's attitude to Abū-Bakr.

Imam al-Ḥasan

When Abū-Bakr usurped the position of leadership, Imam al-Ḥasan (ʿa) was only seven years old. He went to the mosque of his grandfather and found Abū-Bakr on the minbar. He thus said to him,

> Come down from the minbar of my father and go to your father's minbar.

Astounded by Imam al-Ḥasan's words, Abū-Bakr had to answer with a soft word, saying, "You are right! By Allah, it is your father's minbar, but not my father's."[1]

Although he was still youngster, Imam al-Ḥasan (ʿa) understood that no one except his father was qualified enough to ascend the minbar of his grandfather the Holy Prophet (ṣ). This is the very truth, because Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), the commander of wisdom and eloquence, had defended the Holy Prophet (ṣ) in all situations and under the most difficult circumstances in such a way that exceeded all others who claimed having defended Islam.

DISCONTENTED PROTESTORS

A big group of the most prominent companions of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) bore a grudge and protested against Abū-Bakr for he had seized power against Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) the hero of Islam, the most versed in the religious

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[1] Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Ṭabarī, *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah fī Faḍā'il al-'Asharah* 1:139; Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 2:17; al-Khawārizmī, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn* 1:93; Ibn Shahr'āshūb, *Manāqib Āli Abī-Ṭālib* 2:172.

Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, in *al-Iṣābah fī Tamyīz al-Ṣaḥābah* 2:15, states: "This protestation was made by Imam al-Ḥusayn."

In *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqah*, pp. 105, he says: "In the book of *al-Ṣibyān* that is printed in the margin of *Nūr al-Abṣār*, pp. 125, it is mentioned that al-Ḥasan said these words to Abū-Bakr, and al-Ḥusayn said similar words to ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb."

laws, the most knowledgeable, and the most ascetic, who was the worthiest of holding this position, because he was the Holy Prophet's brother, father of his two grandsons, and husband of his daughter Fāṭimah the most beloved by the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and the doyenne of the women of the world. Another reason was that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had ordered all Muslims to pay homage to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) at the congregation of Ghadīr Khumm when he declared,

> ʿAlī is now the master of whomever has regarded me as his master.

In addition, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had declared the special position of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) when he more than once said to him,

> Your position to me is exactly like the position of Prophet Aaron to Prophet Moses except that no prophet shall come after me.

Among these prominent personalities who denied Abū-Bakr's coming to power and usurping this position from Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) are the following:

Salmān al-Muḥammadī

Salmān al-Fārisī (the Persian) was one of the most prominent companions of the Holy Prophet (ṣ). He had full knowledge with Islam, its laws, and its principles. The Holy Prophet (ṣ) cared for him very much that he attached him to his family members, saying,

> Salmān is one of us—the Ahl al-Bayt.[1]

He (ṣ) also instructed,

> Do not say: Salmān al-Fārisī (i.e. of Persia); rather, you should say: Salmān al-Muḥammadī (i.e. of Muḥammad).[2]

Just like the Ahl al-Bayt who are legally forbidden to receive alms, Salmān is also forbidden to receive alms. Confirming this fact, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) is reported to have said,

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[1] Ibn ʿAsākir, *Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq* 4:27; Ibn Saʿd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā* 4:59; al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 3:598.

[2] One day, a man mentioned Salmān as Salmān the Persian before Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir (ʿa), who thus said, "What is this? Do not say: *Salmān al-Fārisī* (i.e. of Persia); rather, you must say: *Salmān al-Muḥammadī* (i.e. of Muḥammad). He is one of us—the Ahl al-Bayt." (ʿAllāmah al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār* 22:349) [*Translator*]

Salmān is forbidden to receive alms.

When Salmān saw how caliphate was dissociated from the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa), he condemned Abū-Bakr and demanded him to resign, saying,

> O Abū-Bakr, to whom will you refer your issue when something you ignore befalls you? To whom will you resort when you are asked a question whose answer is not known by you? What is your excuse as you have advanced yourself to the one who is more knowledgeable than you are, closer to the Messenger of Allah than you are, more familiar with the Book of Allah and the Prophet's traditions than you are, and whom was put first by the Holy Prophet during his lifetime and whom the Prophet instructed you all to follow at the hour of his death? However, you abandoned the Prophet's instruction, pretended to have forgotten his will, breached your promise, broke the covenant, and released yourselves from the bond under which the Prophet put you when you refused to join Usāmah's expedition?[1]

The previous advice of Salmān to Abū-Bakr holds an invitation to adhere to the truth, an invitation to unify of the word of Muslims, and an invitation to hand over the affair of the leadership of the Muslim community to the most knowledgeable in the community; namely, Imam ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib.

ʿAmmār ibn Yāsir

Described by the Holy Prophet (ṣ) as the good and the son of the good, ʿAmmār ibn Yāsir was one of the contributors to the construction of the edifice of Islam and one of those whom were harshly persecuted for the sake of Allah. Among the Companions, he was known for his self-denial and wholehearted devotion to the truth. He also enjoyed a highly considerable standing with the Holy Prophet (ṣ).

When Abū-Bakr gained caliphate illegally, ʿAmmār hurried to condemn him and to condemn the people of Quraysh as well, saying,

> O groups of Quraysh! O groups of Muslims! If you do not know so far, then be it known to you that the Household of your Prophet are the closest to him, the most rightful to receive his inheritance, the most proficient to run the affairs of the religion, the best

[1] Al-Ṭabrisī, *al-Iḥtijāj* 1:42.

protectors of the faithful believers, the best guardians of this nation, and the most sincere to this community. So, order your acquaintance (i.e. Abū-Bakr) to give back the right to its people before your rope shivers, your situation grows weaker, disunity emerges amongst you, sedition invades you forcibly, discrepancy appears amongst you, and your enemy seizes this best opportunity to do violence to you. You have already known that the Banū-Hāshim are nearer to this affair than you are and ʿAlī is the closest of you all to your Prophet. Unlike all of you, ʿAlī is your leader by the binding command of Allah and His Messenger. He is manifestly different from you all as proven by many cases, especially when the Prophet closed your doors (to the mosque) and kept ʿAlī's door open,[1] when he gave him in marriage his

[1] Known as *Sadd al-Abwāb*, the issue of closing all the doors that took to the Holy Prophet's mosque except the door of ʿAlī's house is as follows:

The Holy Prophet (ṣ), until six months after his arrival in al-Madīnah, stayed at the home of Abū-Ayyūb al-Anṣārī. During this period, there was neither any specific place for congregational prayers nor a permanent place of residence for him. He felt it necessary to construct the mosque along with a house for the family. He thus bought a land, got it leveled, and started the construction of the mosque on it. On one side of the mosque, rooms were built for the ladies, which were increased later on as the need arose. In the middle of these rooms the house of ʿAlī (ʿa) was constructed. The Muhājirūn coming from Makkah too started building their quarters on the other periphery of the mosque. They had doors opening towards the mosque and they used to enter the precincts through these doors. The Prophet (ṣ) thought that this arrangement was not proper for the sanctity of the mosque; he therefore ordered that the doors opening into the mosque be sealed and the houses to have doors at the back. He wanted them to enter the mosque only through the main door. He permitted only the door of ʿAlī's house to open towards the mosque. *Al-Tirmidhī* writes: "The Prophet (ṣ) ordered that except the door of ʿAlī's house all other doors to be sealed." [*Ṣaḥīḥ* Al-Tirmidhī *2:214*]

Some persons did not like this arrangement. Certain brows frowned, some mouths opened, and the gossip mill started working. The Prophet (ṣ) heard about the feelings of the companions. He therefore gathered them and said:

"I have neither sealed your door nor allowed ʿAlī's door to remain open. It is Allah Who has ordered the sealing of your doors and leaving ʿAlī's door open." [al-Nassā'ī, *Khaṣā'is Amīr al-Mu'minīn*, pp. 37]

Certain relatives of the Prophet too wished that the doors of their homes would be kept opened towards the mosque; therefore, they complained that showing partiality towards ʿAlī (ʿa) he had allowed him this privilege and refused them the facility. He

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> daughter Fāṭimah as a sign of ʿAlī's superiority to all of you. Besides, the Prophet said about ʿAlī, "I am the city of wisdom, and ʿAlī is its door. So, whoever wants wisdom must come to it from its door." Verily, all of you are obliged to resort to him whenever you face a problem with regard to your religious affairs, while he can dispense with you all in this regard, because he enjoys such unprecedented peculiarities that even the best of you lack. Why do you now depart from him? Why do you usurp his right? Why do you prefer this world to the other world? Evil is this change for the unjust people. Give him what Allah has decided to be for him exclusively. Do not turn back from him retreating. Do not turn back upon your heels; so, you will turn back losers.[1]

In his previous words, ʿAmmār called for the public interest and for taking the Muslim community away from seditions and discommended events. He demanded that the general leadership of the Muslim community must be given to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) whom the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had endued with numerous outstanding virtues such as making him the door to the city of his knowledge. Accordingly, it was unfair to match him to one who lacked such talents and geniuses.

Ab-Dharr al-Ghifārī

One of the most prominent personalities of Islam and companions of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), Abū-Dharr was the voice of justice and truth in Islam. He comprehended the teachings and laws of the religion that are purposed for spreading social justice on the land. He was also well

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said:

"Neither have I sent you out nor did I allow ʿAlī to stay. It is Allah who has kept you out and allowed ʿAlī to stay in." (Al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 3:117)

ʿUmar too considered this a singular privilege for ʿAlī and used to say:

"ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib enjoyed three such special privileges that if I got even one, it would have meant to me more than owning red haired camels." When asked what these privileges were, he said: "The first was that he was married to Fāṭimah the daughter of Muḥammad; secondly, he had the honor of residing inside the mosque with the Prophet and thus the matters that were legitimate for the Prophet became legitimate for him, and; thirdly, he was given the Standard on the Day of Khaybar!" (Al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 3:125) [*Translator*]

[1] Al-Ṭabrisī, *al-Iḥtijāj* 1:43.

known for his continuous protestations against the Umayyad ruling authorities who usurped the public funds and regarded people as their servants.

Expressing his anger with those who eliminated Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) from caliphate, Abū-Dharr addressed these words to the groups of the people of Quraysh and the Anṣār:

> O group of the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār, you and the good ones amongst you all know well that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had said, "The rule over the affairs belongs to ʿAlī after me. After him, it belongs to al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn. After them, it belongs to the members of my Household from the progeny of al-Ḥusayn." However, you have ignored Your Prophet's words and tried to forget what he had ordered you to follow. You have thus followed the worldly pleasures and forsaken the blessings of the Other World whose construction will never be destroyed, whose bliss will never vanish, whose people will never be sad, and whose inhabitants will never die. You have become just like the deviated nations who changed the orders of their prophets after them. Soon will you be bitterly punished for your misdeeds. Allah never oppresses His servants."[1]

In his previous words, this great revolutionist highlighted an important point; namely, he reminded the Muslims of the Holy Prophet's command that the religious and political affairs of the community should be governed by Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and after him Imam al-Ḥasan and Imam al-Ḥusayn (ʿa). After them, the great Imams from the offspring of Imam al-Ḥusayn should rule the community. However, Muslims did not respond to their Prophet's command; rather, they were seduced by the worldly pleasures that caused them to deviate from the truth. As a consequence, they would suffer misfortunes and seditions. Abū-Dharr's prophecy came true; Muslims' blood was shed and the souls of many of them were destroyed at the hands of the Umayyad and ʿAbbāsid dynasties, who created mischief in the land, spread injustice and persecution among Muslims, deluged the lands with oppression, and forced Muslim to act against their wills.

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[1] Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, *al-Khiṣāl*, pp. 432; al-Ṭabrisī, *al-Iḥtijāj* 1:100.

Al-Miqdād ibn al-Aswad

Al-Miqdād was one of the prominent personalities in Islam and one of the most sincere companions of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa). Reproaching Abū-Bakr, he said,

> O Abū-Bakr, retreat your wrongdoing, repent to your Lord, and give back the leadership to its real owner who has more priority to hold this position than you do. You have already known about the allegiance to him that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had bound you with,[1] ordered you to be a soldier under the standard of Usāmah ibn Zayd, and confirmed the illegality of you and your supporters to hold this position when he attached you to the head of hypocrisy and the essence of enmity and rebellion; namely, ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ about whom Almighty Allah revealed to His Prophet this verse: "Surely, your enemy is the one who shall be without posterity." So, fear Allah and hurry to resign this position before it is too late. This is in fact safer for you in your lifetime and after your death. Do not incline to the worldly pleasure and do not be deceived by the people of Quraysh and others. Very soon shall your worldly pleasure knock you down and you will be returned to your Lord Who will then punish you for what you have done. You know for sure that ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib is the successor of the Holy Prophet (ṣ); therefore, give him what Allah has decided for him. If you do, this will cover your defects and lighten your overloads. By Allah, I am but an advisor for you if you only accept my advice. All affairs shall be eventually returned to Allah.[2]

Through these words, al-Miqdād advised Abū-Bakr to resign. However, if Abū-Bakr had resigned at that time, he would have spared the Muslims from many seditions, calamities, and disunity.

ʿUtbah ibn Abī-Lahab

In a form of poetic verses, ʿUtbah ibn Abī-Lahab reproached Abū-Bakr for usurping caliphate, saying,

> *I never expected that this affair (of caliphate) would be turned away*
> *From the descendant of Hāshim in general and from Abu'l-Ḥasan in particular.*

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[1] This is an indication of the famous gathering at Ghadīr Khumm where the Holy Prophet (ṣ) ordered all Muslims to pay homage to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) as their next leader.

[2] Al-Ṭabrisī, *al-Iḥtijāj* 1:43.

Has he not been the first to believe, the first to serve Islam, and the most knowledgeable in the Qur'ān and the Prophetic traditions?

He is also the last to witness the Prophet and the one whom was assisted by Gabriel in washing and enshrouding the Prophet.

He enjoys such virtuous traits that none of you has their likes and no one among these people ever had his righteous features.[1]

These poetic verses expressed ʿUtbah's grief and sorrow for eliminating his cousin Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) from caliphate, while the Imam was the foremost in accepting Islam and believing in its principles, the most knowledgeable with Almighty Allah's Book and the Prophet's practice, and the last person to have witnessed the Holy Prophet (ṣ). Of course, these distinctive features and high standards were not possessed by any other Companion. It was therefore unexpected to deter him from holding the position of leadership.

Abū-Ayyūb al-Anṣārī

One of the most brilliant companions of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), Abū-Ayyūb[2] participated in all of Imam ʿAlī's expeditions and battles. He believed in the Imam's superiority over all others to hold the position of leadership after the Holy Prophet (ṣ).[3] Admonishing Abū-Bakr for usurping Imam ʿAlī's right, Abū-Ayyūb said,

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[1] *Tārīkh Abi'l-Fidā'* 1:159.

[2] Abū-Ayyūb's full name is Khalīd ibn Zayd al-Khazrajī (i.e. of the tribe of Khazraj). He practically witnessed the homage to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) that is known as al-ʿAqabah Homage and participated in the Battle of Badr as well as all the other military campaigns of the Holy Prophet (ṣ). In the Battle of al-Nahrawān led by Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) against the apostates (i.e. Khawārij), Abū-Ayyūb was entrusted to carry the pennon of immunity for those who would leave the enemy's camp and join Imam ʿAlī's. He had many enthusiastic words and sermons in all of which he used to urge the masses to support Imam ʿAlī (ʿa).

His father Zayd, once, came to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and asked him for some advice. The Holy Prophet (ṣ) thus said to him, "I will give you five instructions: (1) Despair of what is possessed by people, for this is the true richness. (2) Beware of greed, for it is the present poverty. (3) Always perform your prayer as if it is the farewell (i.e. last) prayer. (4) Beware of doing things from which you will have to apologize. (5) Love for your brother whatever you love for yourself. (Al-Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shīʿah* 6:322.) He died in Constantinople during the reign of Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiyah. (Shaykh ʿAbbās al-Qummī, *al-Kunā wa'l-Alqāb* 1:13)

[3] ʿAbbās al-Qummī, *al-Kunā wa'l-Alqāb* 1:13.

> O servants of Allah, fear Allah as regards the household of your Prophet and give them back their right that Allah has decided for them. You, as well as all our brothers, have heard the Holy Prophet (ṣ) on many occasions and in many situations repeating these words: "Your leaders after me are the members of my household." Referring to none but ʿAlī, the Prophet (ṣ) also said, "This (ʿAlī) is the leader of the pious ones and the slayer of the atheists. Really disappointed is he who disappoints him and really victorious is he who supports him." So, repent to Allah from your wrongdoing to him, for Allah accepts repentance and He is All-merciful. Do not turn back against him, refusing him.[1]

In these words, Abū-Ayyūb advises Muslims to abide by the truth and work towards whatever achieves their unity and bring together their word. Nevertheless, these people lent deaf ears to him.

Ubayy ibn Ka'b

Ubayy ibn Kaʿb,[2] one of the Anṣār, is the chief of the reciters of the Holy Qur'ān and one of those who swore allegiance to the Holy Prophet (ṣ). He participated in all of the Holy Prophet's expeditions. ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb used to call him *sayyid al-muslimīn* (the chief of Muslims).

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[1] ʿAbbās al-Qummī, *al-Kunā wa'l-Alqāb* 1:13.

[2] Ubayy ibn Kaʿb al-Anṣārī (i.e. of the Anṣār) al-Najjārī (i.e. of the tribe of Banu'l-Najjār) was introduced as the chief of the reciters of the Holy Qur'ān. He participated in the second homage to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) known as al-ʿAqabah Second Homage and fought to the side of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) in the Battle of Badr as well as all the other military expeditions. He used to record in a writing form the Divine Revelation and he was one of those whom the Holy Prophet (ṣ) appointed as clerks (i.e. he used to write epistles of the Prophet). One day, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) asked him, "O Abu'l-Mundhir, in your opinion, which holy Qur'ānic verse is the greatest?" Ubayy thus referred to the holy verse known as *Āyah al-Kursī* (2/255). Confirming the accuracy of this answer, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) put his hand on Ubayy's chest and said, "Congratulations for this knowledge!" He was also well-versed in the religious laws. About him, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) is reported to have said, "The best reciter of the Holy Qur'ān among the people of my community is Ubayy." ʿUmar used to call him the chief of Muslims. He died during the reign of ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān (AH 32) according to a report, although other reports specified the years AH 19 or AH 22 as the date of Ubayy's death. (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣābah fī Tamyīz al-Ṣaḥābah* 1:32-3)

Condemning Abū-Bakr for usurping caliphate from Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), Ubayy said,

> O Abū-Bakr, do not deny the right that Allah has decided to one other than you and do not be the first to disobey Allah's Messenger with regard to his successor and most elite person, as you are challenging his command. Give back the right to its people so that you will be safe. Do not go too far in your error, lest you will be sorry. Hurry to return to the truth so that your sin will be eased. Do not have exclusive control over this matter, which Allah has not decided for you; lest, you will encounter the bad consequence of your deed. Very soon, you will depart what you are now enjoying and come to meet your Lord Who shall interrogate you about what you have done. Verily, your Lord does not oppress His servants.[1]

These words of Ubayy hold sincere invitation to following the truth, achieving the public interest of the community, and working on unifying the word of the Muslims.

Al-Nuʻmān ibn ʻAjlān

The spokesman and poet of the Anṣār, al-Nuʿmān ibn ʿAjlān composed some poetic verses, criticizing Abū-Bakr for holding the position of caliphate, which is the right of ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib (ʿa). He thus said,

> *You deemed it illegal to appoint Saʿd as the caliph! Is it then legal to appoint Abū-Bakr for this position?*
>
> *Do you think that Abū-Bakr is worthy enough to be the leader; while it is well-known that* ʿAlī *is the worthiest?*
>
> *Verily, it is catastrophic not to give this office to* ʿAlī*, who deserves it more than everyone else, whether you know this or not.*[2]

To explain these poetic verses, the poet intends to say that the Muhājirūn (i.e. the emigrants of Quraysh) condemned Saʿd ibn ʿAbādah for he had proposed himself for the position of leadership, regarding such act as forbidden because he did not belong to the tribe of Quraysh. Then, they claimed that they were the most entitled to this office because they had family relations with the Holy Prophet (ṣ). According to their criterion,

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[1] Bāqir Sharīf al-Qarashī, *Hādhihī Hiya al-Shīʿah*, pp. 96.

[2] Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 19:174.

Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) must be more entitled to this office than they are, because he was the closest to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) lineally and socially.

ʻUthmān ibn Ḥunayf al-Anṣārī

One of the best Companions, ʿUthmān ibn Ḥunayf[1] believed that caliphate should have been held by Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) because he was the worthiest of it. Addressing Abū-Bakr disapprovingly, ʿUthmān ibn Ḥunayf said,

> We have heard the Messenger of Allah (ṣ) saying, "My Household are the stars of the earth. So, do not advance yourselves against them. They are verily the leaders after me." Immediately, a man stood up and asked, "O Allah's Messenger, who are those representing your household?" The Holy Prophet (ṣ) answered, "They are ʿAlī and his immaculate sons."[2]

In his protest, ʿUthmān only mentioned a Prophetic tradition about the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) clearly proving that they are the leaders of the Muslim nation according to the command of Almighty Allah and the binding instruction of the Holy Prophet (ṣ).

Sahl ibn Ḥunayf

Declaring his support for Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and addressing the people of Quraysh, Sahl ibn Ḥunayf,[3] one of the best Companions, said,

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[1] ʿUthmān ibn Ḥunayf al-Anṣārī (i.e. of the Anṣār) al-Awsī (i.e. of the tribe of Aws) participated in the Battle of Uḥud and all the battles that followed. In his reign, ʿUmar appointed him as the deputy land surveyor of some areas in Iraq. He thus did his job completely. Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) then appointed him as the deputy governor of al-Baṣrah. He move to al-Kūfah. He died during the reign of Muʿāwiyah. (Ibn al-Athīr, *Usd al-Ghābah fī Maʿrifat al-Ṣaḥābah* 3:376)

[2] Al-Ṭabrisī, *al-Iḥtijāj* 1:103.

[3] Sahl ibn Ḥunayf al-Anṣārī al-Awsī, whose nickname is Abū-Thābit, participated in the Battle of Badr as well as all the other military expeditions of the Holy Prophet (ṣ). In the Battle of Uḥud, he was one of the few warriors who remained steadfast rather than absconding from the battlefield like many others. He had sworn allegiance to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) that he would follow him permanently and sacrifice his life for him. He was then one of the companions of Imam ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib (ʿa) who appointed him as his deputy governor of al-Baṣrah. He then participated in the Battle of Ṣiffīn with the Imam who, afterwards, employed him as the deputy governor of Persia. He died in AH 38 and Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) himself offered

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> All praise and all thanks be to Allah. O people of Quraysh, Bear witness that I saw the Messenger of Allah (ṣ) in this very place (i.e. the Prophet's Mosque) taking ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib from the hand and saying, "O people, this (ʿAlī) is your leader after me and my successor in my lifetime and after my death. He settles my debts and fulfills my promises. He will be the first to shake hands with me on my pond. So, joy is for whoever follows and supports ʿAlī, but woe is whoever lags behind and disappoints him."[1]

Thus did Suhayl testify to what he had heard from the Holy Prophet (ṣ) about Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) the chief of all the pious ones. Indubitably, these people had likewise heard understandably these Prophetic words about the Imam (ʿa), but the worldly interests deceived them, causing them to stream with the lusts of sovereignty and power.

Khuzaymah ibn Thābit

Khuzaymah ibn Thābit[2] was one of the most brilliant, most trustful, and closest companions of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) to him. His testimony was equal to two testimonies, because of his ultimate truthfulness and religiousness. Declaring his support of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), he said,

> O people, do you not know that the Messenger of Allah (ṣ) admitted my testimony without need for anyone else's testimony? I thus testify that I have heard the Messenger of Allah (ṣ) saying, "The members of my Household distinguish between the right and the wrong. They are the leaders that must be followed." I have

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the ritual Funeral Prayer on his dead body. (Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb* 4:428)

[1] Bāqir Sharīf al-Qarashī, *Ḥayāt al-Imām al-Ḥasan* 1:197; al-Ṭabrisī, *al-Iḥtijāj* 1:103.

[2] Known as *Dhu'l-Shahādatayn* (the two-testimony man: i.e. the man whose testimony alone is regarded as two testimonies, since one testimony is inadmissible in many lawsuits according to the religious law of Islam. The Holy Prophet considered Khuzaymah's testimony to be equal to two testimonies), Khuzaymah ibn Thābit belonged to the tribe of Aws. His nickname is Abū-ʿAbbād. He participated in the Battle of Badr and all the military expeditions that followed. He also fought to the side of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) in the Battle of Ṣiffīn. When ʿAmmār was martyred in that battle, Khuzaymah unsheathed his sword and fought ceaselessly until he was martyred. He used to say: I have heard Allah's Messenger saying, "ʿAmmār will be killed by the transgressing group." (Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *al-Istīʿāb*)

> testified to what I had already known. A mission of a messenger is no more than conveying the message plainly.[1]

Thus did Khuzaymah convey what he had heard from the Holy Prophet (ṣ) about the Holy Household (ʿa) whom the Prophet introduced as the leaders of true guidance and the ones whom should be followed.

Abu'l-Haytham ibn al-Tayhān

Abu'l-Haytham[2] recognized properly Imam ʿAlī's true standing, high status, and great position. Professing that Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) deserved the position of caliphate more than anyone else, Abu'l-Haytham said,

> I bear witness that our Prophet, on that day at Ghadīr Khumm, declared ʿAlī as the next leader. The Anṣār on that occasion said, "He has declared him as his successor so that he (i.e. ʿAlī) will be the next leader of the community." Others said, "He has declared ʿAlī as the master of whomever has considered the Prophet as his master." When different opinions were said about that incident,

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[1] Al-Ṭabrisī, *al-Iḥtijāj* 1:102.

[2] Abu'l-Haytham's full name is Mālik ibn al-Tayhān of the tribe of Aws. He was one of the six persons of Yathrib who had met the Holy Prophet (ṣ) in Makkah and sworn allegiance to him twice. More precisely, he was the first to swear allegiance to the Prophet (ṣ). He was the chief of the Banū-ʿAbd al-Ashhal clan. He participated in the Battle of Badr as well as all the other military expedition led by the Holy Prophet (ṣ). (Ibn al-Athīr, *Usd al-Ghābah fi Maʿrifat al-Ṣaḥābah* 4:274)

He was also one of the most sincere companions of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa). He was martyred in the Battle of Ṣiffīn in the year AH 37. Referring to Abu'l-Haytham in one of his sermons, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) expressed his deep sorrow and grief for losing this brilliant person. He thus said,

> Where are my brethren who took the (right) path and trod in rightness? Where is ʿAmmār? Where is the son of al-Tayhān? Where is Dhu'l-Shahādatayn? Where are others like them from among their comrades who had pledged themselves to death and whose (severed) heads were taken to the wicked enemy?

Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) then wiped his hand over his auspicious and honored beard and wept for a long time, then he continued:

> O my brothers who recited the Qur'ān and strengthened it, thought over their obligation and fulfilled it, revived the Prophetic traditions and destroyed innovation! When they were called to jihad, they responded and trusted in their leader then followed him. (*Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon No. 181)

> we sent one of us to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) to ask him about that. The Holy Prophet (ṣ) said, "Tell people that ʿAlī is the master of the faithful believers after me and the most sincere with regard to leading my community." I have thus testified to what I personally have witnessed. So, let him who pleases believe, and let him who pleases disbelieve. Verily, the Day of Discrimination is a day pre-appointed.[1]

According to this testimony of Abu'l-Haytham, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) did entrust the position of religious and political leadership with Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) in the congregation of Ghadīr Khumm.

This is the end of our presentation of the strict protests that were made by the major pious Companions against Abū-Bakr. All these protests prove that Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was the worthiest to hold the position of leadership.

ABŪ-BAKR REWARDS THE SUPPORTERS

Having come to power and held it strongly, Abū-Bakr, along with ʿUmar, rewarded the persons who had helped him seize power. He thus did them many favors and entrusted them with senior governmental offices. Let us now refer to some of these persons:

Anas ibn Mālik supported and had a remarkable role in the process of making people pledge allegiance to Abū-Bakr. As a reward, Abū-Bakr appointed him as the deputy governor of Bahrain.

Qunfudh was a member of the gang that raided on Lady Fāṭimah's house. Abū-Bakr therefore appointed him as the deputy governor of Makkah.

Salamah al-Anṣārī was appointed by Abū-Bakr as the deputy governor of al-Yamāmah.[2]

Al-Maghīrah ibn Shuʿbah was appointed by Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar as the deputy governor of Bahrain, al-Baṣrah, and al-Kūfah respectively.

ABŪ-BAKR'S FINANCIAL POLICY

Historians say that Abū-Bakr, in distribution of the public funds among the Muslims, observed equity and in this field he did not deviate from the Prophet's practice. However, some instances are opposed to this fact,

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[1] Bāqir Sharīf al-Qarashī, *Ḥayāt al-Imām al-Ḥasan* 1:167.

[2] Ibn Ḥajar, *Taʿjīl al-Manfaʿah*, pp. 160.

because, first of all, from the charity funds he controlled, he spent a considerable amount to purchase the loyalty of Abū-Sufyān.[1] He also distributed a part of the public funds among the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār, and sent an amount through Zayd ibn Thābit to a lady from the Banū-ʿAdī clan. This lady was amazed at this; so, she asked, "What is this?"

They replied, "It is a share that Abū-Bakr has distributed to women."

She said, "Are you bribing me against my religion? By Allah, I shall not accept anything from it. Return it to him."[2]

ABŪ-BAKR PUNISHES THE OPPOSITIONISTS

Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar punished severely all those who had opposed the pledge of allegiance to them. Some of these persons will be listed hereinafter:

1. Al-Ḥabbāb ibn al-Mundhir

Al-Ḥabbāb was one of the famous personalities of the Anṣār. Because he had objected to pledging allegiance to Abū-Bakr, the ruling authorities arrested him, trod on his belly, filled his mouth with dust, and broke his nose.[3]

2. Saʿd ibn ʿAbādah

As has been previously mentioned in this book, ʿUmar ordered that Saʿd ibn ʿAbādah, the chief of the tribe of Khazraj, should be killed. So, Khalīd ibn al-Walīd assassinated him.

3. Khalīd ibn Saʿīd

Khalīd was the deputy governor of Yemen during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (ṣ). Because he refrained from pledging allegiance to Abū-Bakr, ʿUmar decided to punish him. However, Abū-Bakr interfered and deterred ʿUmar from that.

4. Buraydah ibn al-Ḥaṣīb

Because Buraydah ibn al-Ḥaṣīb al-Aslamī criticized Abū-Bakr for having usurped caliphate, ʿUmar ordered his constables to beat him. He then banished him out of al-Madīnah.[4]

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[1] *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* 3:3

[2] Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 2:53.

[3] Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 3:2346; Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 1:174.

[4] Ibn Qutasybah, *al-Maʿārif*, pp. 300.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE SAQĪFAH CONSPIRATORIAL MEETING

As much as I know, there has never been any event in the history of Islam more harmful to the Muslims than the event of the conspiratorial meeting that was held under the shed (i.e. Saqīfah) of Banū-Sāʿidah. This event sowed the seeds of disunity among Muslims, cleft their union, tore their concord into pieces, and cast them into great evil.

Let us now refer to some fatal consequences of this event:

DISCREPANCY OF MUSLIMS

About the issue of caliphate (i.e. the religious and civil rule of the Muslim community), Muslims have disagreed intensely although scholars of all Muslim sects have agreed on the necessity of caliphate in its capacity as one of the most important and indispensable elements in the Islamic life without which Muslims can never attain rectitude.

The point of discrepancy in this regard is summed up in the following question: Is holding the position of caliphate conditional upon a nomination text from God and the Prophet, or is it subject to the ordinary processes of candidature and election?

The Shīʿah Muslims categorically believe that the position of caliphate must be held by one nominated by Almighty Allah and the Holy Prophet (ṣ). They, including myself, the author, believe that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) did not neglect the issue of the civil and religious succession to him; rather, before his passing away, he had appointed the leader, ruler, and chief who would lead his community; namely, Imam ʿAlī ibn Abī-Ṭālib, the father of social justice in Islam.

In some previous topics of this book, I have included some Prophetic texts that are neither dubitable nor mistakable, proving the Prophetic

nomination of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) as the next leader of the Muslim community. Besides, a big number of experienced scholars have decided the authenticity of the chains of authority of these traditions, while their purports are free of generalization, obscurity, or imposition.

On the other hand, another Muslim sect claims that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) had neglected the issue of caliphate and relegated it to the Muslims to decide on the one they want to rule them. In other words, the followers of this sect argue that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) did not impose upon them to follow a certain person as their leader; rather, he gave the masses free hand to choose their ruler.

Apart from fanaticism, this opinion is full of points of weakness and debility, because it is illogic to propose that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) who cared for his people very much, acted towards them with the utmost amount of clemency, and it was hard for him that they should be overburdened—it is illogic that the Prophet would leave his community floundering in chaos and ignorance and sinking in the abysmal mazes of life.

In fact, to declare the name of the person who would rule over the Muslims after the passing away of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) was too important to be neglected.

In previous chapters of this book, I have presented the social circumstances that were circulating in the last days of the Holy Prophet's lifetime as well as the dangers that surrounded Muslims internally, like the threats of the hypocrites and the feeble-faith new Muslims, and externally, like the great powers that Islam had threatened with imminent conquest. Of course, all these powers were ready to attack Islam by all means possible and at the first opportunity.

To come to the point, a refined and attentive pondering over the history of Islam reveals to us decisively that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) did entrust Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) with the position of the next religious and civil leadership. The most evident proof that substantiates and reinforces this fact is the famous event that took place at Ghadīr Khumm.

THE INFLICTION OF PERSECUTION UPON THE PROPHET'S HOUSEHOLD

Being another upshot of the Saqīfah conspiratorial conference, the members of the Holy Prophet's household suffered various sorts of persecution and harassment at the hands of those who came to power and seized caliphate illegitimately, such as the Umayyad dynasty.

The Umayyad rulers and their authorities exerted all possible efforts in persecuting the descendants of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and their partisans. During the reign of Muʿāwiyah the tyrant, it was a formal duty upon all religious leaders to revile at Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) from the minbars (i.e. the set of steps in a mosque from which religious sermons are delivered), within the religious sermons on Fridays and feast days, and in the establishments of formal education and institutions of learning and teaching.

This *duty* lasted for long ages until it was cancelled by ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz. The Shīʿah (i.e. followers of the Ahl al-Bayt) also suffered cruel types of painful punishments.

In this respect, Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir (ʿa) says,

> Our partisans were killed in all towns and their hands and legs were cut off merely on suspicion. Whoever would refer to love for or loyalty to us, was cast into prison, his property was destroyed, or his house was ruined.[1]

Depicting the great persecution that he had to suffer because of his loyalty to the Ahl al-Bayt, ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿĀmir al-ʿAblī composed these poetic verses:

> *They kept on chasing me because I only had praised* ʿAlī*, and they regarded this act as cureless malady!*
> *By my Lord, I will not leave this world before my heart becomes replete with love for* ʿAlī *and for his sons on account of my love for Aḥmad.*
> *In fact, I loved them because I loved the Prophet.*
> *I love them, for they represent the true religion; I never loved them for worldly desires.*
> *The evilest of all sorts of love is to love something for a worldly gain.*

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[1] Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 13:150.

As I am fond of them, this means that Allah has created me unblemished, censure-free, and legitimately born.[1]

In this way, the great poet al-ʿAblī has expressed the persecution and punishment he had suffered for his love for Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) the leader of the believers. Nevertheless, the poet would not pay any heed to these cruel deeds, because his love for Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) was not out of emotion; rather, it was for the religion that has imposed the love for ʿAlī (ʿa) on all Muslims. Such love must be the strongest, the firmest, and the most determined in the hearts of true believers.

Referring to the same topic, al-Numayrī composed some poems giving details of the acts of subjugation and injustice that were committed against the Shīʿah for no reason but their loyalty to the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa). The poet thus says,

The Prophet's family and those who love them are nodding their heads for fear of being killed!

The Christians and Jews are safe, while the Shīʿah are experiencing tightness and ordeal among the people monotheism (i.e. Muslims)!

The followers of all religions used to be secured from terror and fear except for the descendants of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and their followers.

One day, Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir (ʿa) was greeted with the morning greeting.[2] He (ʿa) answered,

> This morning as well as all mornings, I am fearful because of my family relation to the Holy Prophet (ṣ), while all other people are safe because of their claim of relating to the Holy Prophet (ṣ).[3]

The following poetic verses are ascribed to one of the Holy Imams (ʿa); the describe the ordeals and calamities that befell them:

We, the descendants of the Divinely-Chosen Prophet, are facing ordeals, but we are acting patiently towards them from amongst the people due to our suppression of rage.

Our ordeal from people is so heinous; both the first and the last of us are trialed by it.

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[1] Bāqir Sharīf al-Qarashī, *Hādhihī Hiya al-Shīʿah*, pp. 145.

[2] The traditional morning greeting of the Arabs comes in the form of this question: "How are you this morning?" [*Translator*]

[3] Al-Dhahabī, *Mīzān al-Iʿtidāl* 4:160.

While these people are glad in the feast days, our feast days are just like the days of our sorrows.

The feast days on which all Muslims are happy, putting ornaments and showing celebrations, have become days of sorrow for the Holy Prophet's family whose house was the center of the Divine Revelation.

The tyrannical rulers who ruled over the Muslim community for ages applied to the descendants of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) such savage and ruthless procedures like massacres, imprisonments, and banishments.

Giving a picture of the sufferings of the Shīʿah during these dark ages, al-Ṭaghrā'ī composed the following poetic verses:

The Jews' love for the family of Moses is very obvious; and their loyalty to the descendants of his brother is well-known.

They have followed the true guidance of their leader who is from the offspring of Aaron. Verily, there is a guide for each people.

Likewise, the Christians are honoring a carpentered piece of wood as a sign of their love for their prophet.

However, whenever a Muslim declares loyalty to the family of Aḥmad, he will be then killed and accused of atheism!

This is indeed the cureless malady because of which the intellects of civilized and uncivilized people dismayed.

They have not regarded the right of Prophet Muḥammad about his descendants. However, Allah is always in ambush![1]

In the previous poetic verses, al-Ṭaghrā'ī the poet brings in the loyalty of the Jews to the descendants of Prophet Moses and Prophet Aaron. Likewise, the Christians are totally loyal to every one who has any sort of connection to Prophet Jesus to the degree that they even hold in the highest regard some pieces of wood that Prophet Jesus is reported to have sit on. As for Muslims, instead of honoring their Prophet's family members, they are massacring and tormenting them!

Another poet has composed these poetic lines:

No single clan that we know, such as the Yamān, the Bakr, and the Muḍar, but that they had shares in the bloodshed of the Prophet's descendants, just like partners who have gathered to slaughter a camel to take their shares.

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[1] Al-Qalandar al-Hindī, *al-Rawḍ al-Azhar*, pp. 359.

The descendants of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) suffered very much from the merciless processes of killing and torment that were targeted at them. In fact, the majority of the clans of these ages had shares in such processes.

Another poet, describing the extreme scope of persecution applied to the Shīʿah, composed these poetic lines:

For their love for their prophet, the Jews were saved from the disgrace of their perfidious vicissitudes of time.
The people of the Cross, for their love for Jesus, could walk with dignity in the village of Najrān.
But the believers, for their love for their Prophet, are being shot with fire in all territories.

These poetic verses express that the Jews and the Christians enjoy safety and security; while the loyalists of the Holy Prophet's Household are suffering the cruelest sorts of torture.

Historicists relate that the son of al-Faḍl ibn Dukayn, once, came to his father weeping. When the father, who had followed the sect of the Shīʿah, asked why, the son informed that the news of his following Shīʿism had been passed from one tongue to another. At this situation, the father said these poetic lines:

My love for you is bringing problems to me that it made me too mute to answer those who ask me about it.
This is so because I just want to spare my life against the informing of the tale-bearers against me and to spare your life, too.
However, no mortal can be saved from the tongues of people.[1]

During the reigns of the Umayyad rulers, accusation of being Shīʿah was an unforgivable crime. More precisely, to be accused of atheism and abandonment of faith was very much easier than being accused of loyalty to the Holy Prophet's Household. This issue attained such horrendous levels that every one who would greet or be greeted by a descendant of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) should be exposed to mental and physical assault by the ruling authorities.

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[1] Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* 12:351; Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Ṭabarī, *Bishārat al-Muṣṭafā*, pp. 143.

Historicists relate that Ibrāhīm ibn Harthamah, once, visited al-Madīnah and on his way he was greeted by a descendant of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa). Violently and intensely, Ibrāhīm said, "Go away from me! Do not cause my blood to be shed!"[1]

The matter reached even further extents; the Umayyad government issued a governmental decree and put it into circulation, ordering all the deputy governors to kill every newborn that was given the name: ʿAlī.

In this connection, it is reported that ʿAlī ibn Rabāḥ feared lest he would be killed because of his name; he therefore made this announcement: "No one is allowed to call me ʿAlī; rather, my real name is ʿUlay."[2]

Shaykh al-Ṭūsī says, "During these ages, the Shīʿah had to encounter such tremendous levels of persecution that no other sect all over the world has ever experienced."

To give an example, Ziyād ibn Abīh the illegitimate brother of Muʿāwiyah ibn Abī-Sufyān, during his reign, killed the Shīʿah wherever he could find them, crucified them on the trunks of date-palm trees, cut off their hands and legs, and gouged out their eyes. Likewise, the criminal terrorist al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī, the deputy governor of Iraq in the reign of ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān, killed about one hundred and twenty thousand persons of the Shīʿah. In his prisons, fifty thousand men and thirty thousand women, among whom sixteen thousand were found naked, died. About the persecution and injustice of al-Ḥajjāj, ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz says, "If every nation brings the most vicious individual of it and we bring al-Ḥajjāj (to compete against each other in a race of viciousness), we will certainly overcome."

In the ʿAbbāsid reign, the Shīʿah suffered even crueler sorts of calamities and tribulations that they hoped if the Umayyad reign would come back despite the cruelty and torment that they used to suffer at that time.

It this respect, a poet says,

Would that the injustice of the Marwānid dynasty come back to us!
And would that the "justice" of the ʿAbbāsid dynasty be in fire!

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[1] Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* 6:127.

[2] Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb* 7:319.

Another poet composed this verse:

Persecution will never come to an end as long as this nation is ruled by one of the ʿAbbāsid dynasty.

Barefacedly and deliberately, the ʿAbbāsid rulers led harsh campaigns against the descendants of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa). Al-Manṣūr, the ʿAbbāsid ruler who had never heard of such words like mercy and sympathy and had never believed in any human value, left behind him a big treasure full of the heads of the descendants of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), as if he had saved it to be presented during his meeting with Almighty Allah!

Likewise, Hārūn the other ʿAbbāsid tyrant set out to exterminate the descendants of Imam ʿAlī at the hands of the headsman Ḥamīd ibn Quḥṭubah who, at one night only, put more than six descendants of Imam ʿAlī to death. Hārūn also sent to prison the great holy Imam Mūsā ibn Jaʿfar (ʿa) and ordered the jailor al-Sindī ibn Shāhak to kill him there. So, the Imam (ʿa) was poisoned inside his cell.

The other tyrannical ruler from the ʿAbbāsid dynasty; namely, al-Mutawakkil, violated all the inviolabilities of Almighty Allah and committed all sins as much as he could. He destroyed the tomb of the Chief of the Youths of Paradise; namely, Imam al-Ḥusayn (ʿa) who is the unparalleled pride of humanity over all ages. He then inflicted strict punishments on the visitors of the holy tomb, which is the shelter of all deprived and persecuted creatures.

However, Almighty Allah took vengeance when He killed him by the hand of his own son. The swords of the Turks thus tore the sin-polluted body of al-Mutawakkil into pieces while he was drunk, causing his cups of wine to be filled with his filthy flesh that was brought up on all indecencies and offences.

In brief, the ʿAbbāsid governments spared no effort in antagonizing the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa), killing their people and persecuting their followers. However, the days of the ʿAbbāsid rulers ended with disgrace and humiliation, while the descendants of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) are still the chiefs of this nation and the guides to prosperity and righteousness, occupying all fields of honor and dignity.

TYRANNY OF THE DEPUTY GOVERNORS

Another consequence of the Saqīfah conspiratorial conference was that caliphate, which is supposed to act as the shadow of God on the earth, was seized by despotic people who did not fear the greatness of Almighty Allah; therefore, they went to extremes in persecuting and suppressing people. At the hands of these tyrants, heavy showers of painful torment were poured on people. They did not differentiate between human beings and sheep, because they did not consider their subjects to have any value, as expressed by al-Kumayt the great poet.

For instance, ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, who was a senior ruling authority during the reign of the Umayyad dynasty and one of their politicians, says, "The land of Iraq is no more than a garden owned by the people of Quraysh." In the view of ʿAmr, the lands of Iraq were not the ownership of their lords; rather, they were possessed by the people of Quraysh who, accordingly, had the right to do whatever they liked in their *ownership* and to spend the fortunes of these lands on their personal interests and desires, while the subjects had no share at all! Muʿāwiyah gave a free hand to certain ferocious persons to rule over the Islamic territories. They therefore usurped the personal fortunes of people, leaving them under the mercy of misery and poverty.

Addressing Muʿāwiyah, ʿUqbah ibn Hubayrah al-Asadī, a poet, composed these poetic lines:

O Muʿāwiyah, we are only mortals; so, be lenient to us. We are neither mountains nor iron!

You have swallowed our lands and divested us of all things, leaving neither standing one nor mowing down one amongst us.

Leave the injustice of caliphate and stand upright; and stop appointing lowly ones and slaves as authorities over us.[1]

Obviously, the previous poetic verses demonstrate that the Umayyads robbed the fortunes of the lands and deprived their real owners of all things. Hence, the majority lands of the Muslims were usurped by them. Intending to give back these lands to their original lords, ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, the Umayyad ruler, said to his relatives, "O sons of Marwān,

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[1] Al-Baghdādī, *Khuzānat al-Adab* 5:225.

you enjoy supreme standing with regard to your lineage and fortunes. Now, give half, if not two thirds, of the property of the people to their original lords… etc."

However, their reply to ʿUmar was this: "By Allah, even if you will decapitate us, we will never give back these lands to their lords."

Threatening them, ʿUmar said, "By Allah, if you will not help me give back these lands to their lords, I will most surely humiliate and defame you."

Al-Numayrī, a poet, composed some poetic verses to explain the persecution suffered by his people after the tax collectors, who were slaves, deprived them of their nutriments and did not leave for them a single bite to eat. Addressing these verses to ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān, the poet thus says,

O representative of the All-beneficent Lord, we are faithful people who prostrate before God in morns and eves.

The tax collectors have disobeyed you when you ordered them (to be lenient) and instead committed scourges and horrible things, if you only had known about them.

They took the chiefs and tore their backs with their whips after they had made them stand before them and handcuffed them.

After they had not left any flesh to cover their bones and any sense of sanity in their minds, they presented their bills.

Even a shepherd whom their whips did not leave anything of him but a leftover while he was frightened,

They took his herd; so, he became out of work and unable to leave his own home.

He thus called on Amīr al-Mu'minīn (i.e. the caliph) because they caused to his body rupture so big that wind could come in and out of it.

He thus was like a bird whose wing was broken by the shooters; so, he sat on the public road waiting for his death.

O representative of the All-beneficent Lord, the camels of my tribe have become scattered tiny groups!

Although my people are Muslims who never stopped giving alms and never abandoned their faith,

They have now reached al-Yamāmah because of banishment, as if they are a group who had murdered a person and they were chastised because of their crime.

For two months, their little camels have tasted nothing but bitter and salty grass.

Thus, Yaḥyā (a tax collector) came to them and burdened over them a load that Muslims consider too heavy to be charged.

These bills have left the rich among them encounter poverty after wealth and left the poor among them feeble.

I have thus left my people referring the solution of their problems to you; lest, they would not be able to bear that forever.[1]

In the previous poetic verses, the poet displayed the unbearable injustice and the horrible acts of persecution that were poured by the tax collector on his people although they are Muslims who carry out the religious duties; they thus prostrate before the Lord in their prayers and defray the poor-rate that is imposed on them. The whips of the oppressive tax collectors flared up their backs. Besides, all their fortunes were usurped by these collectors who left them like birds whose wings were broken; neither alive nor dead. Hunger snapped at their bodies and misery overshadowed over them.

Misappropriation of the public funds by the deputy governors and the governmental officials became a normal phenomenon for people.

When Ziyād, or his son ʿUbaydullāh, appointed Ḥārithah ibn Badr al-Tamīmī as the deputy governor of some territories in Iraq, Anas ibn Abī-Unās, a poet, sent him some poetic verses in which he demonstrated the usurpation of the personal properties of the subjects by the rulers and deputy governors as a natural and common state. Sarcastically, Anas says in these poetic verses:

O Ḥārithah ibn Badr, you have been entrusted with a governmental office. So, act just like the others who betray and rob do!

Do not refuse to usurp anything because it is too little. Rather, your share from the kingdom of Iraq can be as little as the village of Surraq.

The people are of two kinds; one kind is those who give the lie to the usurpations of the officials and say whatever they wish, and the other kind is those who believe.

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[1] Ibn Salām al-Jamḥī, *Ṭabaqāt Fuḥūl al-Shuʿarā'*, pp. 439-441; Abū-Zayd, *Jamharat Ashʿār al-ʿArab*, pp. 341.

Nevertheless, they only say things on conjecture or suspicion; but when they are asked for evidence, they cannot find any.

Do not show lethargy in this regard, because lethargy is the worst thing that may attack one. Not all of those who are given opportunity to gain sustenance will be given sustenance![1]

Thanking Anas for this mordant advice, Ḥārithah answered him with these poetic lines:

May the King of the creatures reward you with the best of His rewards, for you have done a favor by your words and you have given adequate advice!

You have instructed me to be more active. If you had instructed me the otherwise, you would not have found me responsive to you!

The acts of embezzlement and misappropriation of the public funds by the governmental officials were hugely common during the Umayyad reign, because they were supported by the rulers who used to have a share in these acts.

An orientalist says that instead of taking measures of legal interrogation against their deputy governors in order to deter them from persecuting the subjects, the Umayyad rulers used to split fifty-fifty the embezzled funds. This means that these rulers had no problem with the oppressive acts their deputy governors used to do against the subjects. This also means that the one and only concern of the ruler was to fill the central treasury with money.

Supplicatory Prayer of Sadīf

The following supplicatory prayer composed by Sadīf depicts accurately the ordeals, tribulations, and calamities that Muslims had to suffer during the reigns of the tyrannical rulers of the Muslim community:

"O Allah, our spoils of war have become restricted to certain individuals after it used to be distributed among all of us. Authority over us has become subjected to the law of survival for the strongest after it used to be subjected to the law of consultation. The appointment of the next ruler has become hereditary after it used to be subjected to the selection of the community. With the shares dedicated to the orphans and widows,

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[1] Abu'l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *al-Aghānī* 21:333. These poetic verses are however said to have been composed by Abu'l-Aswad al-Du'alī.

instruments of entertainment and music are now purchased. The non-Muslims are now ruling over the Muslims. The affairs of Muslims are now administered by every licentious and sinful person. We have thus become without a defender who may save us from perdition, without a sympathetic person who may looks at us with the eye of mercy, without a just person who may deter those who come to him having committed wrongdoings against others, and without a kind person who may satisfy the bellies that are heated because of hunger. Thus, the people have become stuck to impatience and loss and attached to depression and humility. As a result, the crops of the falsehood have reached its very time of harvest, amassed its scattered parts, piled up together, and it has been firmly settled. So, O Allah, please provide us with a hand of truth that will harvest it, uproot it from the origin, smash its stem, disperse its amalgamation, and disunite its word, so that the truth will be manifest in its most brilliant form, most perfect illumination, and greatest blessing."[1]

The previous prayer of Sadīf gives an account of the policy of the Umayyad rulers with all of its aspects. These rulers exceeded all limits in persecuting and wronging the subjects, violated the rights of people, and disrespected the values and principles of Islam. Openly, the majority of these rulers declared their disbelief and atheism.

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās says, "The Umayyad rulers trod on the brain of the religion and slaughtered the Book of Allah with a blade."[2]

DESPISING THE PEOPLES

Another feature of the policy of the Umayyad rulers was that they despised and looked down on the Muslim peoples. In this respect, al-Walīd ibn Yazīd, the Umayyad, says,

Leave your frequent mention of Si'dā's family, for we are surely the owners of the largest lands and the most abundant money.

We are ruling over these people by means of coercion, inflicting on them humility and persecution.

We are also leading them to the pools of ignominy in humiliation, sparing no pains to ruin them.

In the previous poetic verses, the poet confirms that the members of the

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[1] Shaykh al-Mufīd, *al-Ikhtiṣāṣ*, pp. 133.

[2] Ibn al-Sāʿī, *Mukhtaṣar Akhbār al-Khulafā'*, pp. 4.

Umayyad dynasty have ruled over people by means of power and caused them nothing but humility and disgrace. In fact, this depiction is unexaggeratedly accurate, because the Umayyad rulers followed the policy of persecution and bloodshed, paying no attention to the Muslim people.

INDIFFERENCE TO THE ISLAMIC VALUES

Their indifference to the Islamic values was a distinctive feature of the policy of the Umayyad rulers. The first to have declared this policy was Muʿāwiyah. After the concluding of the truce with Imam al-Ḥasan (ʿa), Muʿāwiyah declared before the masses that he would not fulfill the articles of his truce with the Imam (ʿa). He thus said, "I have given al-Ḥasan my word to fulfill some points that he had specified as conditions. Now, these conditions are under my feet and I will never fulfill even one of them."[1]

The fulfillment of promises and conditions is one of the highly regarded Islamic values. However, Muʿāwiyah paid no attention to his promise and declared his indifference to his binding words.

The governments led by Muʿāwiyah and the descendants of Marwān were direct consequences of the process of eliminating the members of the Holy Household—the center of the Divine Revelation and the essence of wisdom in Islam—from taking their natural position of leadership.

ATHEISM AND APOSTASY

Although it goes without saying that the majority of the Umayyad rulers had originally abandoned the faith of Islam, they did not leave any amount of allegiance to this religion in their hearts after they had come to power and held sway over the Muslims. The first to have forsaken Islam was Muʿāwiyah ibn Abī-Sufyān. This tyrant killed prominent Muslim personalities, such as Imam al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī (ʿa), the Holy Prophet's grandson and one of the two chiefs of the youths of Paradise.

Muʿāwiyah also assassinated the lofty Companion Ḥijr ibn ʿAdī and his faithful brothers in the encounter at Marj ʿAdhrā'. He also put to death ʿAmr ibn al-Ḥamq al-Khuzāʿī, a companion of the Holy Prophet (ṣ).

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[1] Bāqir Sharīf al-Qarashī, *Ḥayāt al-Imam al-Ḥasan* 2:330.

Muʿāwiyah made the Muslims follow a regular program of reviling at the Holy Prophet's Household during the religious occasions. More than once, he declared his unspeakable hatred towards the Holy Prophet (ṣ), because his name was mentioned five times a day.

However, the greatest of all these crimes and serious offenses was committed by Muʿāwiyah when he appointed his son Yazīd as the next ruler of Muslims, although he had already known about Yazīd's awful wickedness, immorality, and apostasy.

After he had exterminated the Holy Prophet's family members, Yazīd recited this poetic line to express his real idea about Islam:

> *It is only that the descendants of Hāshim are playing with sovereignty, while, in fact, nothing came from the heavens and no revelation was sent down!*

Another Umayyad tyrannical ruler who abandoned Islam was al-Walīd ibn Yazīd. This dictator committed all sins and violated all the prohibitions of Almighty Allah. He once made a dome in the same size of the Holy Kaʿbah and decided to install it on the roof of the Kaʿbah to sit under it with his retinue who did not have anything to do with Islam. Bringing with him wines and tools of illegal entertainment, al-Walīd came to the Holy Kaʿbah. However, he could not mount it because he feared the reaction of people.[1]

On another occasion, al-Walīd committed incest with his daughter, depriving her of her virginity! When her governess blamed him, expressing that only the Magi had deemed such an act legal, al-Walīd said,

> *Whoever checks on people will die grieved; and will only the bold win pleasures.*[2]

He also married his father's maidens who had given birth of children from his father.[3]

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[1] Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Tārīkh* 4:356.

[2] Al-Diyārbakrī, *Tārīkh al-Khamīs* 2:330.

[3] *Ibid.*

Another example of al-Walīd's apostasy is that he, once, browsed the Holy Qur'ān to see a good omen in it. However, his eyes fell on this holy Qur'ānic verse: "*And they asked for judgment and every insolent potentate was disappointed*. (14/15)" He then tore the copy of the Holy Qur'ān into pieces and composed these poetic lines:

Are you threatening every insolent potentate? Here I am an insolent potentate!
If you (Qur'ān) will come to your Lord on a day of so-called resurrection, then tell him that al-Walīd had torn you![1]

Hishām, criticizing this act of al-Walīd, said to him, "By Allah, I am not sure whether you are still Muslim or not! You have not left any abominable act uncommitted indifferently and barefacedly."

Answering Hishām, al-Walīd said these poetic lines:

O he who asks about my faith! My faith is the same of Abū-Shākir![2]
We shamelessly drink it (i.e. wine) pure and mixed with both cold and hot water.[3]

Without a doubt, the regimes of such insolent tyrants were only extension of the regimes of those who eliminated Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and the Holy Prophet's household from caliphate and said to them openly, "Prophethood and caliphate should never come together in the same family."

CALIPHS AND IMPUDENCE

The overwhelming majority of the Umayyad and ʿAbbāsid rulers applied themselves totally to entertainment, profanity, and impudence. For instance, Yazīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik, an Umayyad tyrant, exceeded all bounds in insolence and licentiousness. One day, he was too drunk to be steady on his feet. He thus said, "Let me fly!" Sarcastically, a famous she-singer named Ḥabbābah said to him, "If you fly, with whom will you then leave the affairs of the *ummah* (i.e. Muslim community)?" He answered, "I will leave them with you!"[4]

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[1] Al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj al-Dhahab* 3:149.
According to this reference book, al-Walīd used the copy of the Holy Qur'ān as target and started shooting arrows at it!
[2] Abū-Shākir is Maslamah the son of Hishām who criticized al-Walīd.
[3] *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* 5:521.
[4] Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Tārīkh* 4:191.

Yazīd was madly fond of this singer that he could not depart from her for even a moment. One day, she went with him to Jordan. Joking with her, he threw a grape at her. The grape entered her mouth and she choked and became ill. Before long, she died consequently. Yazīd left her dead body unburied for three days during which he very frequently smelled and kissed it. However, some of his retinue could persuade him to bury the body. After that, Yazīd returned to his palace overshadowed with sadness and depression.[1]

Al-Masʿūdī, a historicist, added that Yazīd used to sit by the grave of Ḥabbābah and repeat this poetic live

> *If my soul leaves you or abandons love for you, then it is because of despair, but not out of patience.*[2]

It was said that Yazīd then dug the grave of Ḥabbābah to have a look at the dead body.[3]

Another bad example of the Umayyad rulers is al-Walīd ibn Yazīd about whom Ibn ʿAsākir, a historicist, says, "Al-Walīd was so addicted to intoxicants and delectations that he paid no attention at all to the Hereafter. He was extremely engrossed in improper amusement, entertainment, and taking pleasure with his drinking companions. He used to play on lute and drums. He violated all the prohibitions of Almighty Allah so excessively that he was given the nickname of *fāsiq* (i.e. dissolutely sinful)."[4]

Not very much different from the Umayyad rulers, the ʿAbbāsid rulers exceeded all bounds in impudence and dissipation. Al-Mahdī, the ʿAbbāsid ruler, was totally dipped in consuming intoxicants, listening to musical instruments excessively, and playing with the tools of illegal amusement.

Stirring up the Umayyad people to revolt against the ʿAbbāsid rulers, a poet describes al-Mahdī, the ʿAbbāsid ruler, as extraordinary profligate and impudent. He thus composed these poetic verses:

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[1] Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Tārīkh* 4:191.

[2] Al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj al-Dhahab* 3:198; Al-Balkhī, *al-Bid' wa'l-Tārīkh* 3:48.

[3] Al-Qalqashandī, *Ma'āthir al-Ināfah fi Maʿālim al-Khilāfah* 1:146.

[4] Al-Maqrīzī, *Imtāʿ al-Asmāʿ* 12:281 (Margin).

O descendants of Umayyah, rise up, because your slumber has been taking long time. The true caliph is Yaʿqūb ibn Dāwūd.

O my people, your sovereignty has gone to waste. So, search the "vicegerent of Allah" between flutes and lutes!

Al-Hādī, another tyrannical ruler of the ʿAbbāsid dynasty, committed against the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) a bloodbath whose astounding exorbitance was not less than the exorbitance of the massacre of Karbalā'; namely, the massacre of Fakh.

Moreover, he spent the public funds on the impudent and lewd singers. Ibrāhīm ibn Isḥāq, a famous musician and singer, is reported to have said, "If al-Hādī had lived little longer, we would have built our palaces with golden bricks!"

During the reigns of the majority of the ʿAbbāsid rulers, the public funds were not spent on life developments, spread of knowledge, and eradication of poverty; rather, they were spent on the rakish night gatherings, since any sign of piety or faith could not be found in the palaces of these rulers.

Concisely, history gives a detailed account of the wickedness of the ʿAbbāsid rulers as well as their persecution of the Holy Imams (ʿa), their inexcusable aggressions against the followers of the descendants of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), and their affliction of ceaseless punishments on the followers to the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa).

All these tragic events that befell the Muslim community were the results of parting the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa)—the natural extension of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) in behavior and conduct as well as all life aspects—from the position of leadership.

Needless to say, if the Muslim community had followed the brilliant course that Almighty Allah and His Messenger decided for them, social justice would have been prevalent, no violent or even slight slips would have occurred to them, no devastating quakes would have attacked them in all of their life aspects, they would surely have been nourished "from above them and from beneath their feet," and they would have been ceaselessly endued with Almighty Allah's mercy and graces.

THE PROHIBITION OF RECORDING THE PROPHETIC TRADITIONS

The issue of prohibiting the Companions from recording any of the Holy Prophet's verbal and practical traditions is as serious as the other issues that resulted from the Saqīfah conspiratorial conference. When he seized power, Abū-Bakr issued a governmental verdict of prohibiting recording the Holy Prophet's words after some prominent Companions who enjoyed perceptive understanding had called for recording these traditions so that no additions or deletions would occur to them and no fabrications would be forged against the Holy Prophet (ṣ).

In fact, this call was of great importance. If it had been put into practice, the Prophetic traditions would have been protected against the forgers and liars who were too irreverent to fear God. Besides, this call would have maintained the dignity of Islam against attaching to the Prophetic traditions false reports that are in violation of the spirit and true guidance of Islam.

Moreover, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) is reported to have laid much emphasis on this point and promised endless Divine rewards for those who would undertake this mission. He (ṣ) is thus reported to have said,

> Whoever writes down an item of knowledge or a discourse that I have said, will be endued with continual rewards as long as that item of knowledge or discourse continue to exist.[1]

In this way, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) accorded very much interest to the issue of recording his traditions, because, in one of its aspect, it would render a service to thought and knowledge and it would serve Islam.

Unfortunately, Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar adopted the decision of prohibiting writing down the Holy Prophet's heritage under the pretense that they feared lest Muslims would no longer peruse the Holy Qur'ān and would devote themselves to reading the Prophetic traditions.

Let us now read the following reports in this respect:

It has been narrated on the authority of ʿUrwah ibn al-Zubayr that when ʿUmar had intended to record the Holy Sunnah (i.e. the Prophet's words, deeds, and confirmations), he consulted the companions of the Holy

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[1] Al-Suyūṭī, *Tārīkh al-Khulafā'*, pp. 93.

Prophet (ṣ), and they advised him to record. For about a month, ʿUmar set to seek Almighty Allah's proper guidance in this regard. One morning, after Allah had decided for him, ʿUmar said, "I had intended to record the Holy Sunnah, but I remembered some past nations who applied themselves completely to the items they had written and, as a result, neglected the Book of Almighty Allah. By Allah I swear! I will never allow anything to interfere with the Book of Allah."[1]

Obviously, ʿUmar's pretense is unjustifiable, because the Holy Qur'ān has its own language and style that is totally different from the style of the Holy Prophet's words. Besides, the Prophetic traditions are inseparably connected to the Holy Qur'ān; they specify the general notions, restrict the unconditional issues, discriminate between the repealing and the repealed verses, and explain the common laws mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān.

To the greatest extent, the one and only reason for prohibiting the recording of the Prophetic traditions by Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar was that these traditions comprised tens of words about the virtues, precedence, and significance of the Holy Prophet's Household in the religious and civil fields of the Muslim community. If these traditions then were to be kept in written forms, this would be in violation of the plots of the people of Quraysh who had planned to eliminate the Holy Household from the field of caliphate and had determined to detach them totally from any social and political activity, rendering them as ordinary people in the Muslim community.

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[1] Muʿammar ibn Rāshid: *al-Jāmiʿ* 11:257; ʿAbd al-Razzāq: *al-Muṣannaf* 11:258 H. 484; *al-Madkhal Ilā'l-Sunan al-Kubrā* 1:407; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī: *Taqyīd al-ʿIlm*, pp. 49 and ʿAbd al-Ghanī ʿAbd al-Khāliq: *Ḥijjiyyat al-Sunnah*, pp. 395 as quoted from al-Bayhaqī and Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr.

Yaḥyā ibn Juʿdah narrated that after ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb had intended to record the Holy Sunnah, he changed his mind and distributed a missive in the countries ordering people to erase any item of the Holy Sunnah that they might have recorded. (Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* 10:292 H. 29476; Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Taqyīd al-ʿIlm*, pp. 35; ʿAbd al-Ghanī ʿAbd al-Khāliq, *Ḥijjiyyat al-Sunnah*, pp. 395) [*Translator*: Quoted from *The Prohibition of Recording the Ḥadīth* (the English version); By: Sayyid ʿAlī al-Shahristānī; Translated into English by: Badr Shahin; Publisher: Ansariyan Publications, 2002]

In a few words, the prohibition of recording the Prophetic traditions was one of the most damaging problems suffered by the Muslims. Because of this prohibition, huge numbers of false traditions were fabricated against the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and many irrelevant topics were falsely added to the religion of Islam.

This topic will be discussed, yet summarily, in the following few remaining pages of the book.

FABRICATED REPORTS

In my conception, the most harmful event that caused detriments to Islam and contributed to the disunity of Muslims was the phenomenon of forging lies against the Holy Prophet (ṣ). Such lies were forged for the purpose of gaining certain political interests. To support their policies and authorities, some rulers encouraged and called for forging these lies, most of which were in such fields as the following:

Fabricated Merits of the Companions

A group of false traditions was dedicated to demonstrating fake merits of certain personalities among the companions of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) so that these fabrications would oppose, screen, and find inconsiderable the authentically reported traditions about the excellences and unmatched virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa). Let us now refer to some of these false traditions:

1. It is (falsely) reported that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said, "*My companions are like stars; whomever you follow, you will be guided.*"[1]

Of course, this *report* includes all the *Ṣaḥābah* according to the definition of the non-Shīʿite scholars.[2] It must thus include Kaʿb ibn Ubayy the notorious hypocrite, Abū-Sufyān the deviant, Muʿāwiyah, Marwān, and their likes who placed Muslims under excruciating tribulations, ordeals, and calamities.

2. In the field of the merits of the Companions, it is reported that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) said, "*Allah the Glorified had a look at the warriors of the Battle of Badr and said to them, 'Do whatever you like to do, for I have forgiven you forever.'*"[3]

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[1] Referring to this report, al-Muttaqī al-Hindī has decided it as weak.

[2] For more information about the definitions and denotations of the word *Ṣaḥābah*, it is advised to see the book entitled *The Conception of the Ṣaḥābah's Ultimate Decency*, by Aḥmad Ḥusayn Yaʿqūb, translated into English by Badr Shahin, publisher Ansariyan Publications, Second Edition – 2010.

[3] This fabricated tradition can, for instance, be found in such reference books like

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Obviously, this *tradition* is in violation of the ultimate justice of Almighty Allah Who has declared in the Holy Qur'ān that He will call to account every human being for each and every deed, be it trivial or crucial. Supposing that a *warrior of the Battle of Badr* (i.e. one who had participated in this battle in the side of the Muslims against their enemy) killed a person whose blood is inviolable according to the religious law or committed a wrongdoing against others, adultery, larceny, or any other forbidden act, then this man will not be answerable for these violations, because, according to the fabricated *tradition* involved, Allah had already forgiven and pardoned him! Moreover, this silly idea is in clear violation of the following holy Qur'ānic verses:

> Man can have nothing but what he strives for (and) the fruit of his striving will soon come in sight. (53/39-40)
>
> Then shall anyone who has done an atom's weight of good see it; and anyone who has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it. (99/7-8)
>
> If a man kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell, to abide therein (for ever): and the wrath and the curse of Allah are upon him, and a dreadful penalty is prepared for him. (4/93)

The previous two *reports* have been only examples of tens of such false *traditions* that were fabricated against the Holy Prophet (ṣ) in the field of the merits of the *Ṣaḥābah*.

Fabricated Merits of the First Three Caliphs

Many other *narrations* were invented about the merits of the first three caliphs; namely, Abū-Bakr, ʿUmar, and ʿUthmān, such as the following one:

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) is (*falsely*) reported to have said, "*On every leaf of every single tree in Paradise, this inscription is written: 'There is no god but Allah. Muḥammad is Allah's Messenger. Abū-Bakr is the veracious (i.e. Ṣiddīq). ʿUmar is the distinguisher (i.e. Fārūq). ʿUthmān is the two-light man (i.e. Dhu'l-Nūrayn).*"[1]

Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 4:19 and *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal* 1:80.
[1] Al-Amīnī, *al-Ghadīr* 5:297.

One of the many fabrications of ʿUlayy ibn Jamīl al-Raqqī, this *report* was mentioned by al-Ṭabarānī.[1] Besides, many other *reports* dealing with false virtues of the first three caliphs were fabricated against the Holy Prophet (ṣ). Al-Jāḥiẓ and al-Suyūṭī have decided the falsity of many such *reports* about the merits of these three caliphs.

Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd states, "Ibn ʿArafah, well known as Ibn Nafṭawayh and one of the master traditionists (i.e. versed in the Prophetic traditions), mentioned in his book on the history of Islam that the *reports* about the virtues of the *Ṣaḥābah* were fabricated during the Umayyad dynasty as a means to flatter them, since the fabricators believed that, by such actions, they would humiliate the Hāshimites."[2]

Fabricated Merits of Abū-Bakr and ʻUmar

Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar gained the lion's share of the fabricated *traditions*:

1. Anas ibn Mālik is reported to have said, "*When the Prophet held fraternity ties between Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar, he said to them, 'You both are my viceroys in this world and the world to come. Your and my similitude in Paradise is as exactly as the similitude of a bird flying there. I am thus the breast of the bird and you both are its two wings. You both and I wander about in Paradise. You both and I visit the Lord of the Worlds. You both and I sit in the sessions of Paradise.' The Prophet was asked, 'Are there sessions in Paradise?' He replied, 'Yes, there are sessions of entertainment and amusement.' He was further asked, 'What is the amusement of Paradise?' The Prophet answered, 'There are in Paradise cups made of gold and red sulfur and placed on fine gems. From beneath the leg of the Throne, wind, which is called al-ṭayyibah, blows, making these cups foam. Then, a sound comes out that will make the inhabitants of Paradise forget their lives in this world and whatever they suffered therein.'*"

Of course, this *tradition*, as well as many others, was made up by Zakariyyā ibn Durayd al-Kindī. Commenting on this false tradition, Ibn Ḥabbān testifies to its falsity.[3]

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[1] Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* 5:4.

[2] Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 1:36; Ibn Ḥajar, *Lisān al-Mīzān* 2:62.

[3] Al-Amīnī, *al-Ghadīr* 5:303.

2. Abū-Hurayrah reports the Holy Prophet (ṣ) as saying, "*In the lowliest sky, there are eighty thousand angels imploring God's forgiveness for every one who loves Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar. In the second sky, there are eighty thousand others imprecating God's curse upon every one who hates Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar.*"

Commenting on this false tradition, al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī lines it up with the other false *reports* of al-ʿAdawī from Kāmil ibn Ṭalḥah.[1]

3. The Prophet (ṣ) is reported (yet falsely) to have said, "*The chiefs of the middle-aged inhabitants of Paradise are Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar.*"[2]

When this false tradition was said before Imam Muḥammad al-Jawād (ʿa), he, who was still young, smiled and commented that Paradise does not include old or middle-aged persons; rather, all its inhabitants are beardless youths.

By fabricating this *tradition*, the forger only tried to oppose the uninterruptedly and authentically reported tradition of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) who says,

> Al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are the chiefs of the youths of Paradise.

Many other false reports were forged against the Holy Prophet (ṣ) about fictitious merits of Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar.

Fabricated Merits of Abū-Bakr

The books of *Ṣaḥīḥ* (plural: *Ṣiḥāḥ*; the most reliable reference books of Prophetic Traditions for the non-Shīʿah) have recorded many false traditions about the merits of Abū-Bakr. As models, four of these false traditions will be cited hereinafter:

1. "*Whenever the Prophet longed for Paradise, he would kiss the gray-haired beard of Abū-Bakr."*

In his book entitled *Sifr al-Saʿādah*, al-Fayrūz'ābādī has regarded this false *report* as the most notorious fabricated and forged lies against the Holy Prophet (ṣ), because its falsity is recognized by both reason and adequately good sense. So did al-ʿAjalūnī in his book entitled *Kashf al-Khafā'* (2:419).[3]

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[1] Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* 3:383; Al-Amīnī, *al-Ghadīr* 5:306.
[2] Al-Amīnī, *al-Ghadīr* 5:322; Bāqir Sharīf al-Qarashī, *Hādhihī Hiya al-Shīʿah*, pp. 124.
[3] Al-Amīnī, *al-Ghadīr* 5:312.

2. ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar reported the Prophet (ṣ) to have said, "*When Abū-Bakr was born, Allah looked at the Garden of Eden (the highest place in Paradise) and said, 'By My grandeur and majesty (I swear), I will not allow anyone to enter you except those who love this newborn.*"

Commenting on this *report*, al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī confirms that it is worthlessly fake, and its chain of authority holds the names of many anonymous narrators.[1]

3. Al-Barā', without a further chain of authority, reports the Prophet (ʿa) as saying, "*Allah has made for Abū-Bakr exclusively a dome of white corundum and hung to nothing but His omnipotence in the highest region of Paradise. This dome is always penetrated by the wind of mercy. It has four thousand doors. Whenever Abū-Bakr longs for seeing Allah, one door will be opened through which Abū-Bakr will look at Allah directly.*"

Al-Dhahabī has decided this false *tradition* as one of the most awful fabrications of Muḥammad ibn ʿAbdullāh Abū-Bakr al-Ashnānī.[2]

4. Abū-Hurayrah reports the Prophet (ṣ) to have said, "*When I was taken to the heaven (during the night ascension), in each sky I passed by, I found this inscription: Muḥammad is Allah's Messenger. Abū-Bakr al-Ṣiddīq is behind me!*"

Commenting on this *tradition*, Ibn Ḥajar quotes Ibn Ḥabbān as considering it to be one of the false reports.[3]

Many such false reports were forged against the Holy Prophet (ṣ) in praise of Abū-Bakr.

Fabricated Merits of 'Umar

The books of Prophetic traditions and history are replete with false traditions about the merits of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. The following are few examples:

1. The Prophet (ṣ) said, "*'Umar receives direct words from the angels.*"[4]

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[1] Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* 3:309; Al-Amīnī, *al-Ghadīr* 5:300.

[2] Al-Amīnī, *al-Ghadīr* 5:301.

[3] Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb* 5:138.

[4] Bāqir Sharīf al-Qarashī, *Hādhihī Hiya al-Shīʿah*, pp. 124.

2. The Prophet (ṣ) said, "*ʿUmar is taught directly by the Angel.*"[1]

3. The Prophet (ṣ) said, "*Tranquility speaks on the tongue of ʿUmar.*"[2]

Fabricated Merits of ʿUthmān

Another group of false traditions were made up to speak of ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān's merits:

1. Anas narrated, without a further chain of authority, that the Prophet (ṣ) said, "*When I was taken to the heaven, I entered Paradise and saw an apple attached to a Paradisiacal woman who said, 'I am exclusively created for the wrongly assassinated one; i.e. ʿUthmān.*"

Al-Dhahabī reports this false tradition from ʿAbbās ibn Muḥammad al-ʿAdawī, the notorious forger of lies against the Holy Prophet (ṣ).[3]

2. The Prophet (ṣ) said, "*The angels are shy of ʿUthmān.*"[4]

We wonder why the angels are shy of ʿUthmān. Was it because he banished the great Companion Abū-Dharr al-Ghifārī who matched Prophet Jesus (ʿa) in piety and godliness? ʿUthmān cast out Abū-Dharr to a village called al-Rabadhah where he died hungry and alienated, while ʿUthmān possessed the great funds and fortunes of the Muslim lands, distributing them without measure among Marwān, his father, and his family members. He once declared, "If I had the keys of Paradise, I would certainly hand them over to the descendants of Umayyah."

Or perhaps the angels are shy of ʿUthmān because he tortured physically the great Companion ʿAmmār ibn Yāsir so intensely that he caused him rupture of the abdominal wall!

Or perhaps the angels are shy of ʿUthmān because he punished the lofty Companion ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd violently and deprive him of any allowance from the public fund, causing him to die poor and hungry!

That was not all; ʿUthmān committed more horrible acts. Why is it then that the angels are shy of him?

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[1] *Ibid.*

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] Al-Dhahbī, *Mīzān al-Iʿtidāl* 2:20.

[4] Bāqir Sharīf al-Qarashī, *Hādhihī Hiya al-Shīʿah*, pp. 124.

Fabricated Merits of Mu'āwiyah

Many false reports were forged against the Holy Prophet (ṣ) with regard to merits of Muʿāwiyah ibn Abī-Sufyān, the son of Hind the liver-eater. Some of these lies will be cited hereinafter:

1. The Prophet (ṣ) said, "*On the Resurrection Day, I will not miss any of my companions except Muʿāwiyah ibn Ab-Sufyān, because I will not have the opportunity to see him except after eighty (or seventy) years. At that time, he will come to me riding on a camel made of sweet-smelling musk, it is stuffed with the mercy of Allah, and its legs are made of aquamarine. Calling at him, I will say, 'Muʿāwiyah!' He will answer, 'Muḥammad, I am at your service!' I will ask, 'Where have you been all these eighty years?' He will reply, 'I have been in a garden under the throne of my Lord, exchanging talks. He said to me that this situation was recompense for what I used to smell in the worldly life.*"

This *tradition* is one of the lies forged by ʿAbdullāh ibn Ḥafṣ al-Wakī. Assessing this *tradition*, Ibn ʿAdī says, "I have no doubt that this *tradition* was fabricated by ʿAbdullāh ibn Ḥafṣ."

As to al-Khaṭīb, he comments that this *tradition* is false in its chain of authority and purport."

Commenting on it, Ibn ʿAsākir says, "This is obnoxious *tradition*."[1]

I wonder why the Holy Prophet (ṣ) misses Muʿāwiyah ibn Abī-Sufyān the committer of hideous crimes in Islam. Muʿāwiyah opened a front against Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) the successor of the Holy Prophet (ṣ), shed streams of the blood of Muslims wrongfully, assassinated by poison the Holy Prophet's grandson; namely, Imam al-Ḥasan (ʿa), and killed such virtuous Companions like Ḥijr ibn ʿAdī and ʿAmr ibn al-Ḥamq al-Khuzāʿī, not to mention the other dishonorable and criminal deeds that he perpetrated, violating all Islamic and human principles.

2. Anas reported that the Prophet (ṣ) said, "*The Trustees are seven: the Divine Tablet, the Divine Pen, Archangel Seraph, Archangel Michael, Archangel Gabriel, and Muʿāwiyah.*"

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[1] Al-Amīnī, *al-Ghadīr* 5:299.

Although he was enthusiastically loyal to the Umayyads, Ibn Kathīr mentioned this false *tradition* and ranked with the obnoxious lies that were forged against the Holy Prophet (ṣ).[1]

Shaykh al-Amīnī, the master scholar, commented on this *tradition* by saying, "Wretched be the people who report such disgraceful pieces without having their foreheads sweated out of shame and embarrassment! Is it not ignominious for Islam and its people that Muʿāwiyah the treacherous is introduced as equivalent to the Prophet and the infallible trustees of Allah?"[2]

Other *traditions* were forged to deform the great personality of the Holy Prophet (ṣ). One made-up *tradition* reports that he (ṣ) used to listen to songs and watch dancing ceremonies, carrying ʿĀ'ishah on his shoulder![3] Other *traditions* were deliberately fabricated by Kaʿb al-Aḥbār and the other Israelite enemies of Islam for purpose of degrading the Holy Prophet (ṣ) whose virtues and exploits have reached every corner on this globe and have given him precedence to all of the other prophets.

These false *traditions* extended to the All-exalted Creator to ascribe to Him such imperfect attributes like *His coming, on the Resurrection Day, to Hellfire to see whether it was full or not. When Hellfire asks for more increasingly, it will not be filled until the Lord puts His foot in it! Only then will it say, "Enough! Enough! I am now full out of Your might and honor!"*[4]

The previous false *traditions* have been few models of the forgeries that were made against the Holy Prophet (ṣ). They have been introduced in the reference books of Prophetic traditions, written by non-Shīʿah scholars, under such titles like the merits of the *Ṣaḥābah*. Of course, all these lies were fabricated against the Holy Prophet (ṣ) by the command and under the direct support and supervision of the ruling authorities to be used as points of justification of the clear violations of the religion

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[1] Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi'l-Tārīkh* 8:120.

[2] Al-Amīnī, *al-Ghadīr* 5:308.

[3] Ibn Saʿd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā* 6:145; *al-Sīrah al-Ḥalabiyyah* 1:125.

[4] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* 6:48.

committed by the Umayyad and ʿAbbāsid ruling authorities who had totally deviated from Islam. However, al-Jāḥiẓ and al-Suyūṭī have decided the falsity of numerous *traditions* that were reported about the merits of Abū-Bakr, ʿUmar, and ʿUthmān.[1]

Muʿāwiyah's Role in Fabricating Lies against the Holy Prophet

Assuredly, Muʿāwiyah ibn Abī-Sufyān is answerable before Almighty Allah and before history for the fabricated lies against the Holy Prophet (ṣ), because these forgeries have deformed the great religion of Allah and offended Islam and its real advocates.

Historicists say that Muʿāwiyah wrote this message to his officials and deputy governors: "Try to find the followers, fans, and adherents of ʿUthmān (ibn ʿAffān) as well as those who circulate narrations about his merits and virtues. If you find them, you should show favor to them, approach, and honor them. Write back to me the narrations that they report in this regard as well as their names and the names of their fathers and tribes."[2]

Having seen that Muʿāwiyah had endowed generously with gifts, dresses, grants, and fiefs on the fabricators of *traditions*, many people in every region competed with each other in forging lies against the Holy Prophet (ṣ) so that they would gain more money and proximity to the ruling authorities and their names would be registered in the list of the close individuals to the ruling regime.[3]

In this way, Muʿāwiyah could succeed in his scheme that was aimed at abolishing Islam and eliminating the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) from all the fields of life inside the Muslim community.

Abū-Jaʿfar al-Iskāfī says, "Muʿāwiyah ibn Abī-Sufyān employed a number of the *Ṣaḥābah* and another number of the *Tābiʿūn* (i.e. the followers: the next generation after the *Ṣaḥābah*) to fabricated offensive reports against (Imam) ʿAlī (ʿa) in order to encourage people to speak evil of him and to disavow him. For achieving so, Muʿāwiyah gave them terribly seductive prizes. They therefore fabricated many reports that

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[1] Al-Suyūṭī, *al-La'āli' al-Maṣnūʿah* 6:286.

[2] Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd: *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 1:44.

[3] Muḥammad ibn ʿAqīl, *al-Naṣā'iḥ al-Kāfiyah*, pp. 72.

pleased Muʿāwiyah. Among these *Ṣaḥābah* who had considerable roles in this process were Abū-Hurayrah, ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, and al-Maghīrah ibn Shuʿbah; and from the *Tābiʿūn* was ʿUrwah ibn al-Zubayr."[1]

Muʿāwiyah wrote another letter to his officials and deputy governors on the same topic, saying to them, "Narrations about ʿUthmān have spread out so excessively that it cover each and every province, city, and town. Hence, after you read this letter, I order you to call people to circulate narrations about the merits of the other *Ṣaḥābah* and the first two caliphs (namely Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar). As for the reports that Muslims narrate about the merits of Abū-Turāb (i.e. Imam ʿAlī), you are ordered to contradict all these reports by fabricating opposing ones about merits of the *Ṣaḥābah*."[2]

When this letter was read before people, many false *reports* were forged about tenuous merits of some Companions. People exerted all possible efforts in concocting *traditions* that would achieve the desires of the ruling authorities and meet their plots. Unfortunately, these forged lies were said on religious occasions and congregations; and the teachers of elementary schools were ordered to circulate these fabrications among their pupils to learn them as exactly as they learn the Holy Qur'ān. Thus, women, boys, and servants were nourished with such false material.[3]

These fabrications resulted in corrupting the beliefs of Muslims and casting animosity and seditions among them. In my conception, the made-up *traditions* that cast greatness and honor on many personalities that had no account in Islam—such as Muʿāwiyah and his likes who had deviated from Islam—were among the most serious events by which Muslims have been afflicted.

A Serious Letter of Muʿāwiyah

This is an important and serious letter that Muʿāwiyah ibn Abī-Sufyān sent in reply to a letter sent to him by Muḥammad ibn Abī-Bakr,[4]

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[1] Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 4:63; al-Basyawī, *al-Maʿrifah wa'l-Tārīkh* (Chapter: Biography of Abū-Hurayrah).
[2] Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd: *Nahj al-Balāghah* 11:44-45.
[3] Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *al-Istīʿāb* 1:65.
[4] Although his father was the head of the opponents of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), Muḥammad the son of Abū-Bakr was one of the most faithful devotees of the Imam (ʿa). Muḥammad's mother, Asmā' bint ʿUmays, was married by Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) and thus Muḥammad was brought up by the Imam (ʿa). In fact, history has not been fair to

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inviting him to pay homage to Imam ʿAlī (ʿa).

In this letter, Muʿāwiyah confirmed that all the calamities that afflicted the Muslim community was originally because of Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar. He thus introduced these two persons as the only ones responsible for every event that took place after the passing away of the Holy Prophet (ṣ).

This is the text of this letter:

> "From Muʿāwiyah the son of Ṣakhr to Muḥammad the son of Abū-Bakr who is impious to his father:
>
> I have received your missive in which you have mentioned Allah, His greatness, omnipotence, and authority in an appropriate way and you have mentioned other articles about Allah's choosing His Prophet as well as many other words that you had composed and invented, while these words demonstrate the fragility of your opinion and imply reproach of your father. In these words, you have referred to the right of the son of Abū-Ṭālib as well as his precedence, his relation tie with Allah's Prophet, his support for him, and his sacrifices for him in all horrible and breathtaking situations. So, in your argument against me and finding fault with me, you have presented the virtues of someone other than you. Thank Allah for He has taken away this virtue from you and given it to someone else. We, plus your father, since the lifetime of our Prophet, used to recognize the precedence of the son of Abū-Ṭālib to be binding and his virtue to be surpassing us.
>
> After Allah had chosen for His Prophet what He has in possession, fulfilled what He had promised him, made prevalent his call, and made overcoming his arguments, He took him towards Him. Then, your father and his *fārūq* (i.e. ʿUmar) were the first to rob his right and to infringe his order, although these two had already agreed to do this. They then called him (i.e. Imam ʿAlī) to pledge allegiance to them, but he was too slow and too dilatory to respond to them. As a result, they determined to face him with grievous acts and decided to apply to him the gravest thing (i.e. killing).

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this great personality, because of his objections to his father who usurped caliphate from the Imam and to his sister ʿĀ'ishah who led an armed campaign against the Imam (ʿa). [*Translator*]

> However, he then swore allegiance and surrendered to them; therefore, they neither gave him any share in their affairs nor did they apprise him of their confidential matters. When they passed away and ceased to exist, they appointed ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān after them, following their guidance and patterning after them. However, your acquaintance and you censured him so intensely that you both made even the remote people of acts of disobedience revolt against him. You also incurred the animosity of him secretly and openly, and revealed your rancor towards him until you attained what you had wanted against him.
>
> So, be careful, son of Abū-Bakr, for you will very soon face the bad consequence of your deeds. If you only measure your tiny size with your own tool, you will find that you are too short to be parallel or equivalent to one whose forbearance is as weighty as mountains, whose lance cannot be bent under duress, and whose endurance cannot be attained by any one known for his tolerance. It is your father who had paved the way to him (i.e. Muʿāwiyah), and constructed and established his sovereignty. If our current course is true, then your father was its originator, but if it is false and wrong, then it is still your father who had founded it and we are only partners of him, since we followed his *guidance* and patterned after his deeds. Had it not been for what your father had already done, we would not have opposed the son of Abū-Ṭālib; rather, we would certainly have succumbed to him. However, when we saw your father doing this before us, we only imitated and took after him. So, you must first of all censure your father as you like; otherwise, you must leave this issue. Peace be upon those who turn from their errors and repent remorsefully."[1]

This letter sheds light on the reason for Muʿāwiyah's armed rebellion against Imam ʿAlī (ʿa). In his rebellion, Muʿāwiyah, as he claims, depended upon the actions of Abū-Bakr and ʿUmar who had taken over power by force and usurped Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) from his right, paving the way for Muʿāwiyah and his likes to fight and wage war against the Imam (ʿa).

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[1] Al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj al-Dhahab* 3:60; Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* 1:284; Ibn Saʿd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā* 3:15; Ibn Muzāḥim al-Minqarī, *Waqʿat Ṣiffīn*, pp. 119.

To come to the point, the main reason for all the tragic events that afflicted the Muslims was the Saqīfah conspiratorial conference, which brought upon Muslims innumerable woes and perditions.

Remark of Āl-Yāsīn

His Eminence the late Shaykh Rāḍī Āl-Yāsīn, investigating the black seditions that have winded up the Islamic world as a result of separating the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) from caliphate, which is in turn the main goal for the achieving of which the Saqīfah conspiratorial conference was held, says,

> The conspiratorial process of putting apart the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) from caliphate has always been the object of the historical hot disputes that took place between those who were fond of power and authority all over ages. It has also been the stimulus of staggering tragedies that occurred among the Muslims themselves, and the source of the disparaging reflections on the ideality of Islam. Muslims could have evaded all these problems if caliphate, on its first day, had taken its conspicuous path in which acting upon personal views are illegal, applying the miscellaneous methodologies of politics is cast off, and none has the right to issue any verdict except Almighty Allah and His Prophet:
>
> "And it behoves not a believing man and a believing woman that they should have any choice in their matter when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter; and whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger, he surely strays off a manifest straying. (Holy Qur'ān, 33/36)"
>
> This long aged crushing contention between the prominent families of Muslims that has been transferred among the generations is no more than a result of making way for everyone to aspire for invading the position of the leadership of Muslims. Likewise, the repulsive massacres, Muslims had to encounter at various stages of their history, between the Banū-Hāshim and Banū-Umayyah, between Banu'l-Zubayr and Banū-Umayyah, between Banu'l-ʿAbbās and Banū-Umayyah, between Banū-ʿAlī and Banu'l-ʿAbbās, and so on have been the direct product of breaking the religious tradition[1] on which the Holy Prophet (ṣ)

[1] Throughout the history of the prophets, their successors were always their near relatives like sons, brothers, and so on. For instance, Prophet Noah's successor was his son, Prophet Abraham's successor was his son, Prophet David's successor was his son, Prophet Moses' successor was his brother, and so on. This might be one of

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had focused practically in order that he should be able to prevent the occurrence of such tragic and sorrowful events in Islam.

The exceptionally dreadful misfortunes of the Holy Prophet's offspring (whom were exposed to massacres, crucifixion, captivity, and banishment all over the history) were the results of the first mistake of violating the Holy Prophet's instruction with regard to his future program that he had planned for his descendants and community—a program that would have maintained both the descendants and the community if only they had obeyed.

Unfortunately, these people were too ignorant to perceive the signification of the Holy Prophet's perspicacious policy. They therefore despised that Prophethood and caliphate should be in the same house (i.e. family)! They had already melted in another policy. However, this claim was only the superficial justification they had made, because they could not find any other reason to say to the people. As for their real justification, none knows it except the One Who has full knowledge with the intrinsic substances. Most likely, the real reason for their having separated the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) from caliphate had very strong connection with the bitter bloody memories left by the battles that had been flared up for maintaining the survival of Islam, or the reason had something to do with envy, which "consumes the religion as same as fire consuming logs," as expressed by the Holy Prophet (ṣ).

Fondness of authority and lust for governing has always been the most cureless malady; therefore, it acted as plague for the people. This malady can be found in its most intense states with the powerful people, like chiefs and those who impose themselves upon people as their rulers.

Prophethood and Imamate, in their capacity as Divinely commissioned positions, have nothing to do with the modern concept of politics. In other words, all policies inside the frame of Prophethood or in any of its subordinate administrative affairs must be considered part of the religion and must be understood in this domain. Hence, the one and only referential authority in all of these affairs must be the one who came with the religion and

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the reasons that made Prophet Muḥammad (ʿa) declare Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) as his brother, although he was in fact his cousin and son-in-law. [*Translator*]

his word must always be the decisive criterion."[1]

Conceding to the very strong opinion of Shaykh Āl-Yāsīn, I believe that all the tragic events that attacked Muslims violently were only direct consequences of the Saqīfah conference. One of these tragic events was the policy of aggressive frightening that was applied to the members of the Holy Prophet's family who are the core of Divine wisdom and the source of awareness and inspiration in the Muslim world.

If the Muslim community complied with the Holy Prophet (ṣ) and abided by his decision about the next leadership, which was only intended to guarantee for this community a most exquisite destiny all over ages, this community would most certainly have been the foremost of the entire humanity in civilization, security, and luxury.

The Holy Prophet (ṣ) had planned that the general religious and civil leadership of the Muslim community should be kept in the hands of his descendants who enjoyed sublime talents and qualifications, acted extremely piously towards the religious affairs, and preferred the public interests over all other considerations.

Most surely, if the Muslims had followed their Prophet who cared very much for them and tried his best to save them from all hardships, they would not have suffered the persecutions of the tyrannical rulers who ruled over them through whips and swords, spread injustice and terror, considered the fortunes of Almighty Allah and the public funds as their own properties and the servants of Almighty Allah as their incarcerated slaves, and used the finance of the state to satisfy their lustful desires and impudent night parties.

A swift look into the resources of the Islamic history can discover this fact tirelessly.

This is the end of our study of the Saqīfah conspiratorial conference and the accompanying events that have been the main reason for all the misfortunes encountered by Muslims since the dawn of their history hitherto.

Finally, I hope that the gentle reader would come across pleasure and benefit from this book, which briefs about the reality of what had happened concerning the issue of the Islamic caliphate.

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[1] Rāḍī Āl-Yāsīn, *Sulḥ al-Ḥasan*, pp. 28-9.

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